This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

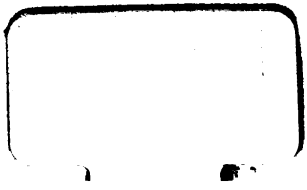
About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

WIDENER
HN UJ2U Z

Phil 2035.80.17

HARVARD
COLLEGE
LIBRARY



MORAL CAUSATION

MORAL CAUSATION

OR

NOTES ON MR. MILL'S NOTES

TO THE CHAPTER ON 'FREEDOM' IN THE THIRD EDITION OF HIS 'EXAMINATION OF SIR W. HAMILTON'S PHILOSOPHY.'

By PATRICK PROCTOR ALEXANDER, M.A.

AUTHOR OF 'MILL AND CARLYLE,' ETC. ETC.

EDINBURGH:
WILLIAM P. NIMMO
1868.

Phil 2035.80.17

HARVARD COLLEGE LIBRARY
GIFT OF THE
CAMBRIDGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
FEB 15 1938

Return to stacks
per bk selector
1/12/82

EDINBURGH: T. CONSTABLE,
PRINTER TO THE QUEEN, AND TO THE UNIVERSITY.

INTRODUCTORY.

In the third edition, lately issued, of his *Examination of Sir W. Hamilton's Philosophy*, Mr. Mill has made a general 'gaol-delivery' of his critics, giving a list of them in his Preface, and in a series of Notes distributed throughout the work, awarding to each—on the *spot*, as it were, at which his crime was committed—such punishment as its measure of atrocity might seem at his hands to deserve. In that list, as author of a little volume entitled *Mill and Carlyle*, I find myself included; and in certain 'Notes' of some length to the chapter 'On the Freedom of the Will'—on which subject it was that I presumed to call Mr. Mill's argument in question—I receive, in reward of my presumption, such stripes as he has deemed due to my offence. Mr. Mill is so great a man, it would almost be a pleasure to be kicked by him; to be criticised by him, I regard as mere honour done me,—and would tender him, very sincerely, my thanks for his little civilities. These I

proceed to reciprocate, in some sort of free-and-easy fashion, by a series of Notes on Mr. Mill's Notes. Mr. Mill having taken the trouble to *write me*, as it were, it is the merest suggestion of courtesy that he should not be left without reply. Whatever comes from Mr. Mill must needs be deserving of every attention, *as* coming from him, even if not specially otherwise. What has *here* come from him—some trivial points excepted, which I willingly score in his favour—asks only a very little attention, to be answered, as I venture to think, with quite conclusive effect.

Against nothing in Mr. Mill's observations—conceived as they are throughout in that spirit of admirable courtesy which, as exercised to his other assailants, he also extends to me—have I personal cause of complaint. Complimentary, of course, they could not be; and if here and there they are edged with some touch of caustic scorn, this also was merely of course, and, as simply in the nature of the case, cannot possibly have matter of offence in it. Mr. Mill must either have despised *my* reasonings, or conceived some little contempt for *his own;* had he chosen the latter alternative, I should ever after have held him unworthy of the name of Philosopher. To one only remark of Mr. Mill do I feel called upon

to take objection, as having read it with positive pain:—'Mr. Alexander's perpetual insinuations, and 'more than insinuations, of *bad faith*, since he makes 'a kind of retractation of their *grossest* meaning, in 'one line of his essay, I pardon, as one of the incidents 'of his rollicking style.' As to the epithet applied to my style, it seems neither here nor there. Perhaps it is meant by Mr. Mill as complimentary; and even were the reverse of a compliment intended in it, this I should readily 'pardon,' as, it may be, no more than 'one of the incidents' of Mr. Mill's extreme distaste for certain of the arguments so conveyed, to which, as it seems, he can reply with no better effect than we shall see him do. What *does* give me real pain is, that Mr. Mill should suppose me capable of supposing *him* capable of anything properly to be termed 'bad faith.' What can I do, in such a case, more than merely reiterate the frank disclaimer already made, to which Mr. Mill alludes? Not guilty—at least in *intention*—I once more distinctly plead. If this be not enough for Mr. Mill, who holds that 'the *motive* has nothing to do with the morality of the action,' I am helpless, except to suggest, that perhaps his own Utilitarian Theory, which involves that extraordinary *dictum*, is more blamable than I in the matter.

One instance only of this sin alleged against me does Mr. Mill condescend to adduce:—'I venture to 'express my opinion in words borrowed from Mr. 'Alexander, that it is not his "veritable conscious-'ness." I will not imitate Mr. Alexander in calling it '"a *fraudulent* substitute palmed off upon him" by 'his philosophical system.' Mr. Mill is at once over-sensitive here, and seems a little to sin in misapprehension. In calling 'a substitute' *fraudulent*, as having passed a deceit on Mr. Mill, I could scarcely intend to imply in Mr. Mill *fraud* in his having been deceived by it. Between the thimblerigger and his victim, I must seriously impress on Mr. Mill that the logical distinction is clear. It seems odd he should force me to do such a thing.

Mr. Mill (I beg pardon for lingering over this point, but in relation to one or two of my coming criticisms of Mr. Mill it is essential it should be clearly made out) permitted himself to insinuate against Professor Mansel some suspicion of his tampering with his intelligence in the interest of a certain system of belief to which he stood pledged. To Mr. Mansel's slightly indignant rejoinder he now in his turn rejoins that, while 'no imputation was in-'tended, the effect of men's necessities of position on

'their opinions, as well as conduct, is far too widely-
'reaching and influential an element in human affairs
'to be *always* passed over in silence for fear of offend-
'ing personal susceptibilities.' Might I venture to suggest to Mr. Mill, without seeming impertinent, that *no* 'necessity of position' can be more trying to a man's candour than that of standing fully committed before the world to a helplessly bad argument? I am not aware that Professor Mansel is pledged to any of his beliefs more deeply than Mr. Mill intellectually is to what he calls a 'Doctrine of Moral Causation,' which is neither Freedom nor Fate, but is supposed to hover somewhere between the two. Suppose that by the rule of two and two make four it should be *proved* that this darling birth of Mr. Mill's philosophical genius could positively hover nowhere except in some *limbo* of the contradictory or the unintelligible, what would be sure to occur? Mr. Mill would instantly proceed to develop the scepticism already latent in him as to any positive necessity in two and two to be *four*. Believing, as already he does (*vide* pp. 86, 87),[1] that perhaps there may be somewhere a world in which two and two, on

[1] Mr. Mill's third edition, from which, unless expressly it is otherwise stated, all extracts are taken.

coming together, are found to have sprouted a fifth, so as to be accurately *five*, the inference could not but come easy to him that perhaps *occasionally* in *this* world such a thing *might* occur; and the 'two-and-two' of the argument would be shown—we need not doubt, with much ingenuity—to be exceptional to the general rule, in mere purchase of herrings or the like admitted. But supposing all this, should we surmise in Mr. Mill 'bad faith' in it? Not in the least; only extremely bad argument, almost in a manner *forced* upon him by the sad 'necessity of position,' involved in his natural affection as a parent for his rickety philosophical offspring. To 'look on *truth* askance and strangely' is almost of needs involved in the very taking up with its opposite. The most candid of men will play a little fast and loose with you in argument, rather than admit the error he is incapable, as unwilling to see, in a hitherto cherished opinion. Almost, I might say, that the man who does not fear that, in such a case, he himself might be found overlooking the thing before his eyes, and seeing something else round the corner—turning himself hither and thither, and, in order to evade a difficulty, indulging in clever wily twists, which might do credit to the old serpent—is some-

what over-confident of his own virtue, and a little to seek in self-knowledge. But a man may really *not* see the thing which is before his eyes; and in thinking he sees round the corner, his *bona fides* may be as perfect as Mr. Mill can possibly desire that even his own should be considered. Some little obliquity of vision I may have in the following pages at points to allege in Mr. Mill; but I only allow myself to allege it as a *natural* obliquity—under the 'necessity of position.' Imputation against him of anything to be called 'bad faith' most positively and *in toto* I disclaim. Nevertheless, in case some offence should again arise in the trick of indiscreet expression, might I simply beg of Mr. Mill once more to make charitable allowance for it, as 'an incident of my rollicking style.' I admit it the reverse of Academic, but in vain should I toil to make it so. Be it 'rollicking,' as Mr. Mill styles it, or 'disgustingly flippant,' as others have been good enough to call it, I fear it is quite past praying for. Without more ado of preface, already more than enough, I pass to the consideration of Mr. Mill's Notes, as they occur in his Book, *seriatim*.

I.

MR. MILL'S NOTE—PAGE 554.

'SIR W. HAMILTON thinks it a fair statement of the Free-will doctrine that it supposes our volitions to be uncaused; but the "Inquirer" considers this a mis-statement, and thinks the real Free-will doctrine to be that "*I*" am the cause. I prefer the other language as being more consistent with the use of the word cause in other cases.' 'Instead of saying that "*I*" am the cause, the Inquirer should at least say some state or mode of *me*, which is different when the effect is different; though what state or mode this could be, unless it were a will to will (the notion so justly ridiculed by Hobbes), it is difficult to imagine. I persist, therefore, in saying, with Sir W. Hamilton, that on the Free-will doctrine volitions are emancipated from Causation altogether.'

I am not, of course, concerned to defend the 'Inquirer;' but I may note, in passing to what more properly touches myself, that he has at least the authority of Reid, whatever it may be worth, for his mode of stating the case. *Vide* Reid—'A *free* 'action is an effect produced by a being who had 'power and will to produce it; therefore it is not an

'effect without a cause.' Elsewhere—'The cause 'must either be the person himself, whose will it is, 'or some other being. The first is as easily con- 'ceived as the last. If the person was the cause of 'that determination of his own will, he was free in 'that action,' etc. (*Reid on the Active Powers*). The statement of the 'Inquirer' is thus, in so far, justified; but, along with Sir W. Hamilton, I am quite in agreement with Mr. Mill that this announcement of 'I' as the cause, is, on any ground of mere *logic* (and as distinguished from the line of reasoning which seeks to carry the subject into a region which *transcends* logic by identifying the will with the mystery of the human personality), quite futile for the purpose of the Free-will argument. 'If the person was the 'cause of that determination of his own will, he was '*free* in that action.' How so? Unless as cause of *that* action the man had a power to do *otherwise*, to constitute himself cause of a *different* action, he was not, according to definition, *free*. And surely, to be cause of *one* action implies in us no power, at the instant, to abolish ourselves as cause of *that* action, and become cause of *another*.

As to Mr. Mill's difficulty about 'the state or 'mode of the *me*, which is different when the effect 'is different,' I am unable to see how there should have been difficulty for him in so exceedingly plain a matter. Surely the *desire* is such a state or mode of

the Me. When we say that 'the *man* is the *cause* of his action,' we must mean, if distinctly we mean anything, the man, as at the instant, specially determined in desire—the desire of the man in fact—the *motive.* It seems thus plain that by announcing 'the man' as cause, nothing is really gained. We do not in the least evade the force of the main argument of the opponent, which represents the act as determined unconditionally by the balance of the desires and aversions.

As to Mr. Mill's 'Sir W. Hamilton thinks it a fair statement,' etc., with his final 'I *persist*, therefore, in 'saying, *with Sir W. Hamilton, that on the Free-will* '*doctrine volitions are emancipated from Causation* '*altogether*,' it may readily be shown that Mr. Mill here is plainly erroneous; and—though not, indeed, without excuse in certain confusions of exposition in his opponent—completely misapprehends Hamilton's real doctrine. But of this hereafter, at large, *apropos* of Mr. Mill's Note, p. 582, in which he expressly invites me to the discussion.

II.

NOTE—PAGE 565.

'IN answer to the statement that "what I am *able* to do "is not a subject of consciousness," Mr. Alexander says (pp. 22 *et seqq.*) :—"Perhaps it is not; but what I *feel* I am "able to do is surely a subject of consciousness. As to Mr. "Mill's 'consciousness is not prophetic; we are conscious of "what is, not of what will, or can be,' it seems enough to say, "that if we are conscious of a free force of volition continu- "ously inherent in us, we are conscious of what *is*." If we can be conscious of a force, or feel an ability *independently of any present or past exercise thereof*, the fact has nothing similar or analogous in all the rest of our nature. We are not conscious of a muscular force continuously inherent in us. If we were born with a cataract, we are not conscious, previous to being couched, of an ability to see. We should not feel able to walk, if we had never walked, nor to think, if we had never thought. Ability and force are not real entities, which can be felt as present when no effect follows; they are abstract names for the happening of the effect on the occurrence of the needful conditions, or for our expectation of its happening.'

I must confess myself in some difficulty with the clause I have put in italics, illustrated, as it is, by

what follows. If nothing is to be held valid as consciousness unless it can be shown to exist in consciousness, antecedent to the special experience through which it is in consciousness educed, it should seem that the very possibility of consciousness is denied, an impossible consciousness *before* consciousness being needed to constitute its validity. We are not conscious of *sensation*, as Mr. Mill seems good enough to admit, 'independently of any present or past exercise of' our sensitive susceptibility; only on the application of the appropriate stimulus, is the organ stung into activity, and sensation evoked in consciousness. We do not, however, on that account discredit our consciousness of sensation. So of Force —it may very well be, that solely by our *exercise* of force, is that force revealed to us in consciousness; is it therefore to be denied, that when we consciously exercise force, we are conscious of force in its exercise? Mr. Mill would seem to maintain this; and he is welcome of course to his denial, though I cannot profess to understand it.[1]

[1] When a philosopher assures me that, in the act of knocking another down, let us say—in the light of the sole interview between Adam Smith and Dr. Johnson, which so much amused Sir Walter Scott, it is perhaps allowable to suppose such a compliment as this passing between two philosophers—he is conscious of no exercise of *force* or *power*, except in the sense of knowing the meaning of his words, I certainly do not understand him; though I can quite understand how, as accepting Dr. Brown's Analysis of Causation—in which *Power*, whilst retained as a *word*, is emptied of all real meaning, and virtually

'We are not conscious of a muscular force continually inherent in us.' It is not asserted that we are; not the less we are conscious, and only conscious, of ourselves, as living force, self-exercised in various modes, of which the muscular mode is one. 'If we are born with a cataract, we are 'not conscious, previous to being couched, of an 'ability to see!' Of this, after careful study, I can make no more than an announcement of the not very recondite fact, that in order to see we must first have an eye to see with. 'We should not feel able to 'walk, if we had never walked,' etc. Of course *not;* and Mr. Mill, in turn, will perhaps admit, that without first *being* able to walk, we should never either have walked, or *felt able* so to do. But how these obvious truisms, that we cannot see without eyes, or walk without being able to walk, prove Mr. Mill's conclusion from them, that 'force is no real entity,' meantime remains obscure to me. They seem quite as much to favour the opposite conclusion, that *force* is

extruded from the universe—he might come to make such an assertion. And from this point of view it is, of course, that Mr. Mill here writes throughout. On the other hand, we find Professor Mansel, as representative of a different school of thought, thus writing—'My first and 'only presentation of power or causality is thus to be found in my con-'sciousness of *myself willing;* every man who has been conscious of an 'act of will has been conscious of *power* therein; and to any one who 'has not been so conscious, no verbal description can supply the 'deficiency' (*Prolegomena Logica*, p. 139). When divergencies of thought are, as here, fundamental, all argument, of course, is simply so much mere waste of words.

the *only* real entity, of the two perhaps the more intelligible, and likely to meet with acceptance.

'It is of course possible that this may be all wrong,' writes Mr. Mill ingenuously, instantly after delivering himself as above. It is really just possible, even though Mr. Mill is the person so delivering himself. That the Ego primarily reveals itself in consciousness as an *energy*, and as such is, in consciousness, self-recognised throughout, is an opinion which may be held; which has been held by philosophers of some note; which Professor Ferrier, in particular, seems to have a good deal to say for; and which Mr. Mill, however for himself he may decline to entertain it, will find it not easy to disprove. But in truth, it would be idle to concern one's-self further with what seems merely a frivolous verbal dispute. The consciousness of Freedom asserted is sufficiently defined as a natural, universal, ineradicable belief, feeling, or conviction of mankind, finding its ratification under the ancient canon of *Semper, ubique, ab omnibus.* About the *ab omnibus* there is, however, some little difficulty; for though some exceedingly stout Necessitarians have admitted that they *had* such a feeling, while clearly convinced of its absurdity, others of the school, among whom Mr. Mill is to be numbered, protest they have not any feeling of the kind, nor ever had.[1] This 'practical feeling' of Freedom—of a

[1] Not in the strictest sense accurate as regards Mr. Mill, who

power in us to have willed and done otherwise than as we did—was never yet, that I know of, denied, however, by any one who had not, as philosopher, committed himself to the opposite theory. The suspicion, as inference, seems reasonable, that the theory and the denial stand related, as in some sort cause and effect. From this point of view it was that I ventured to suggest, as the proper authority in the matter, 'the general consciousness of the race, *philo-*'*sophers with rigour excepted.*' Taking literally this sweeping exclusion, really meant as no more than a bit of *quasi*-humorous exaggeration (I admit there seems no mighty humour in it), Mr. Mill treats me, in regard of it, to a little easy, but not, as it seems to me, exceedingly felicitous sarcasm. 'If this,' he says (the tendency, that is, to interpret facts in conformity with 'preconceived opinion'), 'be the normal effect of 'Philosophy; if the effect of cultivating our power of 'mental discrimination be to pervert it, let us close 'our books, and accept Hodge as a better authority 'in metaphysics than Locke or Kant; and, I suppose, 'in astronomy than Newton.' Well, if *this* is not accurately to be called the '*normal* effect of philosophy,' which has other effects less questionable, it is not unfrequently *one* effect. Does Mr. Mill really deny this? He can scarcely intend to do so, I should

steadily, and even, as we shall see, *obstinately*, declines to give any distinct deliverance as to his genuine feeling in the matter.

say, judging from the remark (p. 620) in his comparison of Kant and Hamilton—'but in ability to 'discern psychological truths, *uncoloured by a theory*, 'he (Kant) seems to me inferior to Hamilton.' Kant, in his observation of the facts of consciousness, had, it seems, then—in common with Mr. Mill and others—a trick of looking at them through the coloured medium of his theories. Mr. Mill will perhaps not decline to admit that Hodge, as not having *any* theories, has, at least to *that* extent, distinctly the advantage of Kant. As to 'Hodge being a 'better authority in *metaphysics* than Kant, and, I 'suppose, in *astronomy* than Newton,' Mr. Mill must have been aware, in writing this, that he only attained his little points at some expense of intellectual confusion. But perhaps he was so pleased with his points, he thought he had them cheap at the price. As regards the particular consciousness in question, I don't mind saying, with all plainness, that I consider the despised Hodge—admitted somewhat the inferior in the matters of astronomy and Metaphysic—greatly preferable, as an authority, to Mr. Mill; and if I can clearly show—as I shall find no difficulty in doing—that Mr. Mill, whilst quite declining to admit that he has this feeling of Freedom, has it all the same, just as Hodge has, I think I shall have shown fair ground for my preference of the last-named philosopher.

Meantime, to proceed with Mr. Mill's note: 'Mr. 'Alexander denies that the belief that I was free to 'act can possibly be tested by experience, *a posteriori*; 'since experience only tells me the way in which I 'did act, and says nothing about my having been able 'to act otherwise.' What I said was in effect this—that experience—as Mr. Mill uses the term in the passage I was engaged in criticising—experience, *simpliciter*, or in its separate items, as distinct from the reasoned 'induction from experience,' on which he elsewhere relies, and the force of the argument from which it is fruitless to seek to evade,[1] can 'neither confirm nor invalidate' our consciousness of Freedom, as asserted. On this obvious ground—our sole possible experience is, that of *two* alternatives we have chosen *one*; from this experience there can certainly be no inference in us of a power to have chosen the *other*; and as little can there be inference in us of defect in such a power; for supposing such power to exist in us, we could still have only chosen *one* of the alternatives, though *possibly*, it might have been the *other*. Experience tells us what we *did*; as to what we *could* do, it tells us something; as to the *other* thing which we did not do, it makes no deliverance whatever, either of *could* or *could not*.

[1] In so far, that is, as it amounts to a demonstration of the Causation of human actions; but this, again, amounts, as we shall see, to no *contradiction* of the fact of human Freedom.

Mr. Mill's reply to this ought, I think, as coming from such a man, to take rank as a curiosity of literature, in this particular branch of it:—'Mr. Alexander's 'idea of the conditions of proof by experience is not 'a very enlarged one. Suppose that my experience of 'myself afforded two undeniable cases, alike in all 'the mental and physical antecedents, in one of 'which cases I acted in one way, and in the other in 'the direct opposite; there would then be proof by 'experience, that I had been able to act either in the 'one way or the other.' There would, indeed, *then* be proof, as stated. But nobody living ought to know better than Mr. Mill, that his instance of experience supposed is one utterly impossible; that 'two *un*-'*deniable* cases, alike in *all* the mental and physical 'antecedents' never occurred, or *could* occur, either in *his* 'experience of himself,' or in any other person's experience; that the mere difference in point of time, in itself inessential for the argument, must needs involve and necessitate other and most essential differences in the 'mental and physical antecedents,' so that the identity supposed 'undeniable' would not only be extremely deniable, but is not, without plain absurdity, to be asserted. Surely in the *second* of Mr. Mill's two cases supposed, there could not but be present a whole series of antecedents, *not* present in the *first;* to wit, the highly important series *evolved by the first case itself*, the antecedent of having acted

so, with other antecedents to be summed as the intermediate result of his having so acted. In this obvious consideration alone, were there no others, Mr. Mill's supposition is stultified. Its futility may be further made manifest, by considering how Mr. Mill would deal with such a case as that put by himself, if he found it alleged *against* him. Constantly it occurs that a man who in certain circumstances has acted in a particular way, on a recurrence of circumstances which *seem* to be precisely similar, is found, on some incalculable whim or caprice, to act in a way quite different. Dr. Reid was capable of drawing from such a case an inference of human Freedom. Does Mr. Mill admit the inference? Not in the least; he would scout with scorn the notion that the two sets of antecedents, however they might *seem* to be *alike*, actually *were so;* and infer some subtle occult difference in the causes to account for the difference in the effect. No amount of evidence would, in such a case, avail to convince Mr. Mill of the identity of the two sets of antecedents. It is however *possible*, according to Mr. Mill, to find 'two *undeniable* cases, alike in *all* the antecedents.' Let us suppose Mr. Mill to have found them; he has convinced himself, by an accurate and exhaustive analysis, that '*all* the antecedents are *alike;*' the identity is to Mr. Mill *undeniable.* And now suppose, —unless Mr. Mill means boldly to beg the question in

his own favour, he must admit the legitimacy of the supposition,—that much to Mr. Mill's surprise, a *different* action should in the *second* case be found to ensue! Mr. Mill would *then* be bound to admit Freedom. But *would* he admit it? Nothing of the kind, of course; Mr. Mill would merely hum and haw a little, as men do when they find themselves in difficulty; surmise, as indeed he well might, that *there must have been some mistake;* that his analysis of the conditions could not have been quite so *exhaustive* as he had supposed it; and conclude with resolutely *denying* the identity before announced *undeniable.* Certainly wherever he might find himself at a loss, it could scarcely be in the reasonings by which he sought to show that in announcing the identity undeniable, he had been somewhat a rash philosopher, and more or less oblivious of principles elsewhere by himself insisted on. It would be well if Mr. Mill, in this relation, would bethink him of his own arguments, exhibiting the futility of the 'Experimental Method,' as applied to the phenomena of Society. They equally exhibit its futility, as here applied by himself, to illustrate a psychological problem. No more in the one than in the other field, can the Past, by any possibility, reproduce itself with exactitude sufficient to ground any valid induction. In a word, Mr. Mill's supposed 'two *undeniable* cases, *alike* in *all* the mental and physical antecedents,' can

exist only as a temporary hallucination in the brain of Mr. Mill supposing them. My 'idea of the conditions of proof by experience' may not be 'very enlarged,' but Mr. Mill is not likely to succeed in enlarging it by a fabrication of instances *outside of all possible experience*, and which, were it fairly put to him, he could not but admit to be so.[1] If Mr. Mill can only confute my argument as to experience, by the putting of cases which could never in experience occur, it seems plain that in seeking to confute, he has somewhat forcibly confirmed it. I must therefore continue to think that in here writing as he did—'If 'our so-called Consciousness of what we are able to 'do (of Freedom) *is not borne out by experience*, it is a 'delusion,' Mr. Mill exhibited some little misapprehension as to the relation of Experience to the matter in hand; making Freedom, as test of its truth, demand from experience a ratification, in the very nature of the case impossible, were Freedom thrice over assumed.

As a mere point of curiosity, it is perhaps worth a

[1] I venture to presume Mr. Mill would admit this, were it only on the evidence of such passages as the following:—'There is not one of 'the facts surrounding a human being, or of the events which happen 'to him, that does not influence in some mode or degree his subsequent 'mental history.' 'It is certain that our mental states, and our mental 'capacities and susceptibilities, are modified, either for a time or 'permanently, by everything which happens to us in life' (in which last the clause 'for a time' had better, I think, be extruded, on grounds sufficiently obvious).—*Logic*, vol. ii. chap. 'Ethology.'

moment's consideration, to what extent the experience which Mr. Mill considers possible of 'undeniable cases alike,' etc., supposing it not to confirm, would *invalidate* our alleged consciousness of Freedom. Of *two* alternatives we choose *one*. From the experience that we did choose *one*, there is plainly no inference whatever against our power to have chosen the *other*. No one will be so absurd as to allege in a man's choice of *one* of two alternatives, a contradiction by experience of his consciousness of a power to have chosen *either* of the two. And now, suppose an 'undeniable case' in which *all* the antecedents are exactly reproduced, and in which it is found that *again* this *one* alternative is chosen. Experience, which before told us that the man acted *so*, now tells us he has acted so *twice;* but it seems as far as before from telling us that he *could not have acted otherwise*. Supposing a man *free* to act *otherwise*, surely he might yet act *so*, and again and again so act. And as of two cases, so it might almost seem of two thousand—the two thousandth case of his acting *so*, would prove no more than the first perhaps, that he *could not have acted otherwise*. Experience would simply assure us that the man had acted in the one way two thousand times in succession. As the cases are plainly supposititious, and could never in experience emerge, it does not seem to matter a pinch of snuff whether I am right or wrong in this.

In a postscript to the little Essay which Mr. Mill has honoured with some share of his attention, intended to correct somewhat of suspected crudity in my first statement of this particular point, I noted Mr. Mill's averment that our so-called Consciousness of Freedom 'has no title to credence except as an 'interpretation of experience; and if it is a false 'interpretation, it must give way;' and I did not seek to deny, that if it was, as Mr. Mill said, merely 'an interpretation of experience,' it ran some risk, as conflicting with Mr. Mill's 'complete induction from experience.' But I asked of what special 'experience' it was that Mr. Mill supposed it 'an interpretation;' and whether it was not wildly absurd to suppose that we should habitually 'interpret' our experience (the sole one possible for us) of having done *one* of two things, into a consciousness of being able to have done the *other*. Wild as seems the absurdity, I cannot but think that Mr. Mill, who offers no explanation, is still fully committed to it. It might indeed be alleged, in reply, that I ignore the previous *deliberative* experience, of which probably it is—it might be said,—and not of the immediate experience of act, that Mr. Mill considers our 'so-called consciousness,' a *mis-*'interpretation.' Two courses of conduct are before us, and we are in doubt which to choose. The mind oscillates between the two, considering now one, now the other; and feel-

ing, whilst *each* is before it, an inclination to choose *it*, and a sense of *ability* to do so. Finally it chooses *one;* and recalling those items of the deliberative experience of which the *other* was the object, it illusively transfers them to the instant of act, and infers its ability at that instant to have actually chosen, not the one it *did* choose, but the other—infers, in a word, its Freedom. In this sense our consciousness of Freedom might, with some plausibility, be represented as an inference from, or interpretation of, experience—which, 'if shown to be false, must give way.' Had this been the ground occupied by Mr. Mill, the further inquiry would necessarily have emerged, whether in the very experience interpreted there was not already involved the authentic consciousness of Freedom, said to be a merely erroneous 'interpretation' of it? But, as against Mr. Mill, it is happily not necessary to discuss this somewhat nice and obscure question; for of the saving suggestions above he cannot in the least have the benefit. The 'experience' he really means is quite too clearly indicated—'We never know that 'we are able to do a thing except from our having 'done it. We should not know that we are capable 'of action at all if we had never acted. Having 'acted, *we know, as far as that experience reaches, how 'we are able to act,*' etc.; and it seems positively to shut him up to the surely rather ludicrous notion that

we 'interpret' our doing of *one* thing to mean, not that we really did *that* thing, but that we *could* have done—*another*.[1]

A little further on in this Note (p. 566), I admit correction at the hand of Mr. Mill; and I am all the more bound to do so, that my falsely made point against him was precisely of a kind likely to be rather telling with the ruck of half-instructed readers:—'It 'would hardly be worth while to notice a pretended 'inconsistency discovered by Mr. Alexander between 'what is here said and my recognition in a former 'work of a "practical feeling of Free-will," "a feeling 'of Moral Freedom we are conscious of," if Mr. 'Alexander had not inferred from it that I "was at 'one time conscious" of what I now, for the con-'venience of my argument, deny to be a subject of 'consciousness. Mr. Alexander himself quotes the 'words in which I spoke of this practical feeling of 'free-will as not one of free-will at all in a sense

[1] The account hypothetically here given of our conviction of Freedom, as merely a hallucinatory reminiscence of what takes place in the process of deliberation, is plainly that pointed at by Hume, when in 'Note F (*Essays*),' he says that 'the Will moves easily every way, and produces 'an image of itself (or a velleity, as it is called in the schools), even on 'that side, on which it did not settle.' The question, a somewhat nice one, as to whether or no the origination of our feeling of Freedom can be thus sufficiently accounted for, I have not to discuss with Mr. Mill, by whom it is not mooted. Further on (p. 128), it will be found that I return to this point—which I do not remember to have seen investigated—offering simply so much remark on it as seems needful for the purpose in hand.

'implying the theory, and took pains to describe 'what it really is.' The justice of Mr. Mill's criticism here I quite frankly allow;—the more readily that, without aid from Mr. Mill, I had already, on a reconsideration of the matter, detected the mistake I had fallen into. Dr. Johnson, once upon a time, when questioned by a lady at a literary tea-party as to how he could possibly have been guilty of some trivial admitted error in his Dictionary, answered with brusque candour, 'Ignorance, madam, was the cause 'of it—gross and inexcusable ignorance.' I suppose I may as well emulate the Doctor, and simply admit here stupidity. My stupidity, I admit, was gross; and I have only this little excuse to offer for it. When Mr. Mill, in the opening of his chapter on this subject in the *Logic*, spoke of the 'practical feeling of Free-will common to all mankind,' naturally, I humbly submit, though I grant very incompetently (the chapter being studied as a whole), I supposed him to mean the practical feeling in the matter, which really *is* 'common to all mankind;' and when he afterwards spoke of 'the sense of moral Freedom we are conscious of,' I merely went on in my blunder, omitting to note sharply that this sense of moral Freedom was expressly by Mr. Mill defined as no more than 'a feeling of being able to modify our character, *if we wish*.' But *this* is *not*, I maintain, 'the practical feeling of Free-will common to all

mankind,' *Mr. Mill himself included.* Mr. Mill's own 'practical feeling of Freedom' is something considerably *more* than this. If—as with no great pains I hope to be able to do presently—I can distinctly show this, I shall not, indeed, have acquitted myself of misunderstanding Mr. Mill; but, more or less, I may have made it obvious how it was that, not altogether inexcusably perhaps (some admitted laxity in perusal allowed for), I came to so misunderstand him.

III.

NOTE—PAGE 567.

WITH a certain deep end of my own, premising that, within the space of a minute, Mr. Mill was to put his finger to one side of his nose or the other, I desired to be informed—apologizing for the somewhat too homely nature of the instance—whether, having touched the left side of his nose, Mr. Mill did not *feel* he could have willed to touch, and touched, its right side? This to more than one of my critics has seemed to be shocking irreverence. The coarse insinuation that Mr. Mill has actually a nose, these critics have gravely resented as an insult to so profound a philosopher. Had I insinuated that Mr. Mill was destitute of a nose, I could have better understood their objection. Mr. Mill himself, in regard of my 'homely instance,' is less sensitive than some of his friends, and has nothing more savage to say of it than that it 'reminds him of the *asinus Buridani*.' 'Mr. Alexander's *naïf* expectation that his oppo-'nent's answer will be different, because of the futility 'of the example, reminds one of the *asinus Buridani*.' Seeing I purposely constructed it somewhat on that

model, I cannot be at all surprised at this. From Buridan's puzzle it differs but slightly; yet the two are not quite identical. Had I asserted that on Mr. Mill's principles, in the absence of any assignable motive to determine him to touch one side of his nose rather than the other, he could not, when asked to do so, have touched his nose at all on either side, the identity would have been nearly complete. As it is, the similarity is sufficient to account for Mr. Mill's being reminded of the more ancient example. In order to estimate the value of Mr. Mill's subsequent rejoinder here, let me glance for an instant at the purpose with which I was led to invent so apparently 'futile' a case. I wished to try if by such a device it might be possible to get Mr. Mill to give to a conspicuously plain question the plain answer, which he seemed resolute to avoid giving. The question before Mr. Mill was the sufficiently simple one—doing *so*, don't you feel you had power to do *otherwise?* Have you, or have you *not*, a consciousness, so defined, of Freedom? This question, as I insisted, 'asks simply a *Yea* or a *Nay* on a candid self-interrogation,' and is not, except *evasively*, in any other terms to be answered. But no answer in these frank terms was, it seemed, to be had from Mr. Mill. No answer *at all* to the question put to him, Have you or no such a consciousness? was in fact to be had from Mr. Mill, who, instead of answering *this* question, kept answer-

ing the entirely different one—Can this consciousness of Freedom alleged give good logical account of itself? He persisted, as I said, 'in answering the one question in terms suggested by the other;' asking as to his consciousness of Freedom, instead of the Yes or No desired, we received in reply 'a synopsis of Necessitarian argument.' As thus—'I am told,' writes Mr. Mill, 'that if I elect to murder, I am conscious I 'could have elected to abstain. *But am I conscious* '*that I could have abstained, if my aversion to the crime* '*and my dread of its consequences had been weaker than* '*the temptation? If I elect to abstain, in what sense* '*am I conscious that I could have elected to commit the* '*crime? Only if I had desired to commit it with a* '*desire stronger than my horror of murder; not with* '*one less strong.*' Mr. Mill is told he is conscious of so and so, and implicitly the question is put to him *Is* it so, or is it *not?* The question thus put to him Mr. Mill answers by putting *another* question, '*But* am I conscious,' etc. etc.? I take leave to say that, in a sense, this is exceedingly *Scotch* metaphysics, though I am confident no sample of the sort is to be met with either in Reid or Stewart. Mr. Mill cannot surely suppose that, in putting this *other* question, he is answering the question put to him. If it be not essentially *another* question, where is the force of the *but* with which he must needs preface it? His deliverance, in point of fact, amounts to this—But really

now, is this Freedom, about which you interrogate me, capable of being construed to thought, or reduced to a rational statement? Again—'I therefore dispute 'altogether that we are *conscious of being able to act* '*in opposition to the strongest present desire or aver-*'*sion.*' Mr. Mill is welcome to dispute modes of consciousness which are not those asserted.[1] But surely nothing can be much more evident than that a man who, when asked, Acting *so*, don't you feel you could have acted *otherwise?* insists, as here and throughout, on rambling off into a con-

[1] Our consciousness alleged of Freedom is practically, and surely quite intelligibly, defined, as a feeling that doing *so* we had yet a power to do *otherwise.* Freedom is thus *practically* and intelligibly defined a power to do otherwise than as we do. *Speculatively*, it is not intelligibly to be defined at all, the attempt at a speculative definition resulting in one or other of these forms of solecism—a power to act *without* a motive, to originate a 'motiveless volition,' or a power to act 'in opposition to the strongest motive,' involving the contradiction that the strongest motive is in point of fact *not* the strongest. But nobody ever yet, that I know of, asserted a *consciousness* of Freedom under either of these speculative forms of solecism; and until such a mode of consciousness is asserted, Mr. Mill, in 'disputing' it, has the dispute entirely to himself. He is merely setting up a paltry puppet, the triumph involved in the bowling over of which, and carefully setting it up again once more to bowl it down, seems essentially a triumph of the poorest.

In vain would Mr. Mill allege that 'to do otherwise than as we do,' and to 'act in opposition to the strongest motive,' are really the same thing. For—admitting it no otherwise to be conceived of—*how* did Mr. Mill become aware of this? How but by a course of speculative inquiry, leading him to a theory of human action as in every case strictly determined by the balance of the desires and aversions. And into the question of 'practical feeling' or consciousness, to intrude his speculative theories, is to evade the question in its proper simplicity, and involve the whole matter in confusion.

sideration of temptations, desires, and aversions, their *relative strength*, and so on, has left the simple ground of feeling or consciousness to expatiate on that of *reasoning*. In aid of this vice of Mr. Mill, who would plainly *never* answer the question put in the frank terms of *Yea* or *Nay*—which are really the only ones to be tolerated—so long as escape was possible for him into the region of motives, desires, and aversions, it occurred to me to frame an instance for him, from which the very ghost of anything to be called a rational *motive* seemed excluded; and, in hitting on the case suggested, of the two sides of his nose, I considered I had indifferently succeeded. Obvious accidents of disturbance excluded—which perhaps to specify minutely might subject me to a charge of further irreverence—it is impossible Mr. Mill should seriously allege anything to be called a *motive*, for his touching the left side of his nose instead of the right, which equally solicits a preference. Motives are not here of course absent; but merely so rarified, or attenuated, as utterly to elude appreciation and defy articulate statement. If I allowed myself to cherish 'expectation' that in *the absence of all motives and desires assignable*, Mr. Mill might perhaps be beguiled into an answer, not hopelessly embarrassed like his previous ones, with considerations of *motive and desire*, irrelevant to the question put to him, and only perti-

nent to a wholly different one, that expectation is indeed proved by the result, a *naïf* and even stupid one. Mr. Mill being asked,—having touched the left side of his nose, *does* he feel or does he *not*, he could have elected to touch the right side? and passionately entreated to answer so simple a question 'without 'bringing any of his logical great guns to bear upon 'it,' *thus* answers, with what seems to me a very loud and full salvo of them—'I should, on the supposition 'which he makes, be aware (I will not say conscious) 'that I could have touched the right, had I so willed 'it; and aware that I could, or even should have so 'willed, *if there had existed a sufficient inducement, 'not otherwise. If any one's consciousness tells him 'that he could have done so without an inducement, or 'in opposition to a stronger inducement*, I venture to 'express my opinion, in words borrowed from Mr. 'Alexander, that it is not his "veritable conscious-'ness."' And *now*, may I simply ask of Mr. Mill—the disturbances of course apart, at which I only timidly ventured to glance—what shadow of anything to be rationally called an *inducement*—either weak or strong—does *his* 'veritable consciousness' inform him of, for touching, in the case supposed, the side of his nose which he *did* touch, in preference to the *other?* Would Mr. Mill be good enough to expound to us the *inducement?* If he *cannot*—and I believe him much too shrewd to commit himself to

such an attempt—is it not sufficiently obvious, that Mr. Mill here, in obstinately declining, as before, to answer the question put to him in the desired terms of *Yea* or *Nay;* and proceeding to discourse with philosophical gravity of *inducements* (of which the *only* account to be given is, that for his steady purpose of evasion, he must needs imply or assert them), simply illustrates anew and more forcibly the confusion in which he persists in involving the subject? Having acted *so*, don't you *feel* you could have acted *otherwise? Yes*, or *No?* To this conspicuously plain question, it seems, a plain answer cannot be coaxed from Mr. Mill, even if we concoct charms for him. Cart-ropes, perhaps, could not drag it out of him; and it may even be, that his philosophical constancy in the matter might emulate that of the martyr, and be proof against the 'torture of the boot,' if applied.

When a gentleman in the witness-box steadily declines to answer a plain question put to him; escapes upon an evasion; and on being desired by counsel to observe that it *is* an inadmissible evasion, simply repeats the evasion, when the question is anew put to him in a form purposely shaped to exclude it; the feeling in Court is apt to be, that the witness is a little in a difficulty, and that the question is one to which it does not suit him to give a plain answer. If we similarly infer in the present case, that Mr. Mill, in the matter of his feeling of

Freedom, obstinately refuses the *Yea* or *Nay* desired and indeed implored of him, as the brief and only competent answer, simply because such an answer *sans phrase* would be inconvenient for him, we shall not be much out in the inference. His *true* feeling in the matter incidentally becomes obvious further on (p. 583), when, in defining the conditions under which 'exemption' from moral criminality must be accorded to acts, under other conditions held criminal, he says —'Yes, if he really "*could not help*" acting as he did; 'that is, if it did not depend on his will; if he was 'under physical constraint, or even if,' etc. etc. Certain of his actions excepted, therefore, on the ground that he 'could not help' them, all his other voluntary actions (the actions which 'depend on his Will'), Mr. Mill unmistakably implies, it is in the power of the man to 'help.' Doing *so*, the man could yet have *helped* doing so, and done *otherwise*. To *this* Mr. Mill is here fully committed, not merely as his practical feeling in the matter, but as positively his real belief. And this of a power in us to *help* doing as we do, or do otherwise, is the express definition of Freedom. Can the proof be more clear and explicit than it is in the light of this passage—from which, as now re-issued with the stamp of his careful revision upon it, Mr. Mill cannot possibly withdraw—that, as I pledged myself to show, Mr. Mill, even whilst declining to admit in himself Hodge's practical feeling

of Freedom, has it all the same, just as Hodge has? The reader, I may hope, sees now with sufficient clearness the *raison d'être* of Mr. Mill's insuperable reluctance to give us a plain *Yes* or *No* to a question which can properly no otherwise be answered. Could he have been got to do so, to the question—doing *so*, is it or *not* your feeling, you could yet have *helped* doing so, or done *otherwise?* he must inevitably have answered, I *could* 'have helped it,' I was free to do *otherwise—such* is my genuine feeling in the matter. And this feeling, I may observe *en passant*, amounts to something very different from 'the practical feeling ' of free will common to all mankind,' defined by Mr. Mill in the *Logic*, as no more than 'a feeling of being able to modify our character, if *we wish*.' I don't the least intend, in any of the above remarks, to impeach Mr. Mill's candour, or imply that he *consciously* shirks a question, as knowing it would be awkward for him to answer it. But that in point of fact, he *does* shirk a question, which there is evidence he could not have candidly answered except as his opponents would wish him to do, seems simply a thing *proved*. For it is not to be supposed that Mr. Mill in writing, reconsidering, and rewriting 'Yes, if he really "could not *help*" acting as he did,' etc., was all the time ignorant of his own meaning, or innocent of meaning at all. Touching the slight alteration in the passage, made by Mr. Mill in revision of it, something may hereafter be said.

IV.

NOTE—PAGE 575.

'MR. ALEXANDER draws a woful picture of the pass which mankind would come to, if belief in so-called Necessity became general. All "our current moralities" would come to be regarded as "a form of superstition;" all "moral ideas as illusions," by which "it is plain we get rid of them as motives;" and consequently the internal sanctions of conscience would no longer exist. "The external sanc-" tions remain, but not quite as they were. That important " section of them which rests on the *moral* approval or dis-" approval of our fellow-men has of course evaporated;" and "in virtue of a deadly moral indifference" the remaining external sanctions "might come to be more languidly enforced than as now they are," and the progressive degradation would in a sufficient time "succeed in reproducing the real original gorilla." A formidable prospect; but Mr. Alexander must not suppose that other people's feelings about the matters of the highest importance to them are bound up with a certain speculative dogma, and even a certain form of words, because, it seems, his are. As long as guilt is thoroughly regarded as an evil, it would be quite safe even to hold with Plato that it is the mental equivalent of bodily disease; people would be none the less anxious to

avoid it in themselves and to cure it in others. Whatever else may be an illusion, it is no illusion that some types of conduct and character are salutary, and others pernicious to the race and to each of its members; and there is no fear that mankind will not retain the property of their nature by which they prefer what is salutary to what is pernicious, and proclaim and act upon the preference. It is no illusion that human beings are objects of sympathy or of antipathy as they belong to the one type or to the other, and that the sympathies and antipathies excited in us by others react on ourselves. The qualities which each man feels to be odious in others, are odious, without illusion, in himself. The basis of Mr. Alexander's gloomy prophecy thus fails him.'

The passage here criticised by Mr. Mill was really no more than it professed itself, a mere 'swift confused outline not worth taking any great pains with' in the writing, and which, for all its bearing on the subject, Mr. Mill needs scarce have been at pains to criticise. Further, it was professedly the merest *fancy* sketch of '*tendencies*' calculated on 'a hypothesis to be regarded as practically an impossible one.' To criticise it from the ground of the *actual*, as Mr. Mill here does, is therefore plainly illegitimate. 'The '*basis* of Mr. Alexander's gloomy prophecy thus fails 'him!' Of a prophecy, no more than a sportive flight of fancy, and, as such, announcing itself *based* on 'a practically impossible hypothesis,' where is the sense of such a criticism? In the very nature of the case,

the basis of my prophecy, in Mr. Mill's serious sense, fails me; but as I built on it only a very slight card-castle, as knowing it an 'impossible' basis, and distinctly admitting it such, what becomes of the basis of Mr. Mill's elaborate criticism? As a criticism it has plainly no meaning; as a demonstration of the impossibility of an admittedly 'impossible hypothesis,' it seems to have considerable merit, but might almost be considered superfluous. Moreover, such as it was, my sketch, in assuming a world of Necessitarians, assumed them as not only understanding their own doctrine, but as destitute of every feeling or impulse not *logically* to be brought into harmony with it; *not* as Necessitarians of Mr. Mill's type, who so little understand their own doctrine, that, believing in Necessity or unconditional Causation, they don't in the least cease to believe with their opponents who advocate Freedom, that they 'could have helped' their every action with all the results which may hold of this; and perhaps it might be shown, were it worth while, that in regard of the passage in question, and Mr. Mill's deliverance upon it, this distinction is not one wholly without a difference; but clearly it could not be worth while, the very basis of Mr. Mill's deliverance being, as we have seen it, erroneous. One or two random remarks may suffice.

That 'it would be quite *safe* to hold with Plato, that guilt is the mental equivalent of bodily disease'

(almost as a matter of course Plato does not hold this; what he holds is, that guilt is an *analogue* of bodily disease, which is not exactly an *equivalent*[1]), I can scarcely concede to Mr. Mill. On this ground, that plainly it would cease to be considered *guilt* in the understood sense of the term. The word *culpable* would cease to have a meaning, and we should no more *blame* a man for murdering his mother than for having an attack of typhus. We should not the less continue to 'thoroughly regard his act as an *evil*'—*imprimis*, from the point of view of sympathy with the poor old lady, probably foolish enough to love her own life a little; and further, as prospectively threatening ourselves, a little like the old lady enamoured of our own mostly foolish lives. But as *moral* evil, plainly we should not regard it; *moral* as distinct from *natural* evil, and as ground of blame or disapproval (*moral*, of course, for there are other forms of disapproval), would not any longer be recognised either in ourselves or others. The internal sanctions of *conscience* would clearly in this view be nowhere. Considering how indifferently we get on with the internal and external sanctions combined, I confess I should look upon our safety as more or less compro-

[1] His view is in no essential respect different from that set forth by Butler, in his three introductory Sermons. *He* also maintains that Virtue is, in a sense, the health, and Vice the disease, of the mind; and in point of fact all moralists, of whatever school, are, I should say, pretty much agreed as to this.

mised were we left to depend for it solely on the latter. That 'we should still be anxious' (on obvious grounds I cannot go *quite* Mr. Mill's length of '*not the less* anxious') 'to avoid it for ourselves,' etc. etc. etc. In all this Mr. Mill, if he supposes he is fighting any one, is at least not fighting *me*. Inasmuch as he here says no more than I had myself said in writing, that even in default of the *moral* relations of actions, 'relations to *utility* would remain, on which ground 'we might properly encourage the one class of per-'sons, and discourage the other by hanging them as 'good riddance, and some hint of a warning to a 'public supposed amenable to motive,' I can *here* of course have no dispute with him. Whatever we make of morality, pleasure is pleasure, pain, pain; and on mere motives of fear and appetite, systematically worked to that end, Society, in some brutal and degraded form of it, might still perhaps contrive to exist. 'I might add, that even if his *groundless* an-'ticipations' (sportively set forth *as* groundless) 'came 'to pass in some other manner, and disinterested love 'of virtue and hatred of guilt faded away from the 'earth; though the human race, thus degenerated, 'would be little worth preserving, it would probably 'find the means of preserving itself notwithstanding.' Had Mr. Mill, in doing me the compliment to read and reply to me (it is one which, in all seriousness, I appreciate), done me the further compliment of read-

ing me with a little attention, he could not possibly have supposed that *here* he was joining issue with me. All this I can very well concede to Mr. Mill, as having myself implied it, as we saw, in the work he is criticising; and in *one* further remark which he makes in relation to this topic, I frankly admit myself corrected. 'The external sanctions, instead of being 'more languidly, would probably be far more rigor-'ously enforced than at present; far more rigorous 'penalties would be necessary, when there was less 'inward sentiment to aid them; and however desti-'tute of pure virtuous feeling mankind might be, each 'of them would be far too well aware of the import-'ance of other people's conduct to his own interest, 'not to exact those penalties without stint, and with-'out any of the scruples which at present make con-'scientious men afraid of carrying repression too far.' It gives me pleasure to be *so* criticised. Could a *sic omnes* have been written over Mr. Mill's remarks throughout, my pleasure might perhaps have been marred more or less, and any little *gaudia certaminis* I might have promised myself in running a tilt with Mr. Mill must needs have come much to grief. What I said as to the 'external sanctions' being likely, on the disappearance of the 'internal' ones, to be 'more languidly' enforced, was, I believe, from my own point of view, correct enough, in as far as that there *would* be such a *tendency;* but I omitted to take into ac-

count the *per contra* suggested by Mr. Mill, which is really, I think, of clearly preponderating importance. I admit that my 'woful picture' was, even as a *fancy* picture to *this* extent, plainly a *faulty* one. Mr. Mill is not *quite* the philosophical good girl of a Fairy Tale very many of his admirers have supposed him. *All* his words are not necessarily pearls and rubies; but he cannot speak, even in Parliament, without dropping an occasional jewel, which might almost seem out of place there as distracting to nine in ten of the Senators; and on *no* subject could he possibly *write*, at some point of which he would not sparkle, as here.

Fundamentally flawed, as we have seen it, this passage of Mr. Mill has had somewhat more of my attention than it 'deserves,' or will quite 'repay.' Not the less on one significant clause of it I must further proceed to remark: 'A formidable prospect! 'But Mr. Alexander must not suppose that other 'people's feelings about the matters of the highest 'importance to them, are bound up with a certain 'speculative dogma, and even a certain form of words, 'because, it seems, his are.' Truth is *one*, as I understand the matter; and if my 'speculative dogma' conflicts with my 'practical feeling' on a matter of whatever importance to me, I must sacrifice the one or the other, considered as a guarantee of *truth*. If I hold to my 'speculative dogma,' I cannot *speculatively* regard the 'practical feeling' which conflicts with it

as aught but, so to phrase it, a document of illusion. Mr. Mill is, it seems, not embarrassed with any considerations of this kind. As speculative dogma, he asserts unconditional Causation as exclusive of human Freedom. He asserts, that is—if in the least he knows his own meaning—that no man can in anything *help* doing as he does. On the other hand, on what can only be the ground of practical feeling, we have just seen him assert or *imply*, with a clearness equivalent to assertion, that every man—certain specified cases excepted—*can* help doing as he does, which amounts to an assertion—if again we suppose Mr. Mill to know his own meaning—of Freedom. These are contradictory propositions, yet to both of them Mr. Mill is clearly committed. From *which* of them is it, that on finding the incongruity pressed upon him, Mr. Mill would elect to retire? From the *last* it would be of course—to wit, that we can *help* our actions. And now, if we *cannot help* our actions, on what ground does Mr. Mill continue to maintain that we are yet *morally* responsible for them? There is *no* ground on which he can do so; for we have it under his own hand—'Yes, if he really "*could not help*" acting as he did,' the man is not morally criminal, and *justly* the subject of punishment. Mr. Mill's 'speculative dogma' is thus distinctly, on his own showing, seen to ground a direct negation of the moral accountability of man. That Mr. Mill should think it competent for him at

this point to reclaim,—'Oh! my feelings on matters 'of such high importance to me—my moral feelings— 'are not bound up, whatever yours may be, with any 'speculative dogma,' is simply a matter to be marvelled over. The sole question in dispute is, as to whether these feelings, the existence and supreme importance of which are not by any one denied, can, divorced from all power in us to *help* our actions, be shown to have a *rational basis*—it is a purely *speculative* question. That here, as elsewhere,[1] Mr. Mill should think it of importance to allege, in regard of it, *the existence of the feelings themselves*, thus announcing an obstinate practical conviction or instinct as of weight against the opposed speculative conclusion, is really as gross a blunder as Dr. Johnson's rough and ready refutation of Berkeley by kicking a stone with his foot, by Mr. Mill himself elsewhere with scorn commented on. It is, in point of fact, precisely the *same* blunder transferred to the spiritual plane of thought. Mr. Mill's scorn, like the curses of the Eastern proverb, had better 'go home to roost.'

[1] 'That a person holding what is called the Necessitarian doctrine 'should on that account *feel* that it would be unjust to punish him for 'his wrong actions, seems to me the veriest of chimeras.'—*Mill on Hamilton.*

That Mr. Mill's 'feelings about the matters of highest importance to him' are his feelings as to 'moral distinctions,' no one can possibly question, the sentence in the text being looked to, *apropos* of which his Note is introduced.

See further on this point as follows—Pp. 115-116.

V.

NOTE—PAGE 579.

'How far Mr. Alexander understands the first elements of the ethical theory he denounces, is shown by one of his arguments, which he is so fond of that he repeats it several times, that if the protection of society is a sufficient reason for hanging any one, it holds good for hanging an innocent person or a madman (pp. 56, 57, 65, 89). He repeatedly says that this has just as deterring an effect as hanging a real criminal; being of opinion, apparently, that hanging a person who is not guilty gives people a motive to abstain from being guilty. As to the madman, he asks (p. 65)— "How should the state of mind of the maniac, as unamen- "able to motive, any way affect the efficacy of our hanging "him for murder, as a means to deter others from murder?" Mr. Alexander really has no claim to be answered till he has got a step or two beyond this. Perhaps, however, he may be able to see, that all the deterring effect which hanging can produce on men who are amenable to motive, is produced by hanging men who are amenable to motive. Hanging, in addition, those who are not amenable to motive, adds nothing to the deterring effect, and is therefore a gratuitous brutality.'

In saying, in a sort of sub-sarcastic way, that I am so fond of an argument that I repeat it several times,

the several pages being specified, Mr. Mill is plainly of opinion he triumphantly refutes my argument. But surely in this, there seems to be some logical fallacy, unworthy of so strict an intelligence. It is just possible I may have been fond of my argument, as finding it really a good one; precisely on which ground, Mr. Mill, as at first sight disliking it (p. 56), might naturally be much disgusted to meet with it again and again (pp. 57, 65, 89). It is precisely poor Jack's complaint against the boatswain who scores his back for him, that, having given him a cut with the cat, he proceeds to 'repeat it several times,' to the extent of two dozen or more, perhaps. That Mr. Mill, though escaping more easily, has Jack Tar's reason to dislike my pestilent argument, and resent, as he does, the repetition of it, will presently perhaps appear, from his very small success in replying to it.

That I can anywhere be said to have *denounced* Mr. Mill's Utilitarianism—further than as saying in effect, that at times it lay open to the suspicion of quietly assuming the ultimate moral basis, its need of which is by implication denied—is simply not to be alleged. For *Mr. Mill's* Utilitarianism, as an 'ethical system,' I have really nothing but respect. His book on the subject, with the trifling limitation suggested, is an admirable little treatise, in its kind to be held a model. In holding that inductions of utility determine *what* shall be consecrated as *right*, and *what* censured

as *wrong*, I should be disposed to go nearly all lengths with Mr. Mill; and as to the 'Immutable Morality' business, I regard it pretty much as a sort of reverend old Mummy, which it is necessary to unswathe from time to time, in the interest of Historical Science, but which is now as defunct as Pharaoh. In fact it was, I rather think, Mr. Mill himself, who conclusively *slew* the good old doting creature. Did ever any one seriously try to defend, as against his assault, the position of Messrs. Whewell and Sedgwick? I do not in the least know; but should rather suppose *not*. Going along with Mr. Mill so considerable a way as this, I only venture to part company with him in questioning, whether the primary moral conception or idea of *right* and *wrong*, under which, *as* right and wrong, the various things held right and wrong come thus to group themselves in contrast—and without which, as already existing in the mind, it seems plain that rightness and wrongness could of nothing whatever be predicated—can be come at by any manipulation of considerations merely utilitarian. This question—in which I do not profess to see my way with anything like perfect clearness, having only in the most cursory way considered of it—I happily need not here meddle with, as confessing myself much at a loss in regard of the matter in hand, to discern its relation to Mr. Mill's 'ethical system,' and my assumed inability to understand it.

It would be pity indeed for Mr. Mill's ethical theories, which include so much that is valuable, if they had to stand or fall with the reasonings wherewith he seems here disposed to identify them. It is presented as 'Mr. Alexander's opinion that if the protection of 'society is a sufficient reason for hanging any one, it 'holds good for hanging an innocent person, or a 'madman. He repeatedly says that this has just as 'deterring an effect as hanging a real criminal; *being 'of opinion, apparently, that hanging a person who is 'not guilty gives people a motive to abstain from being 'guilty.*' What I wrote was—hanging a person who is not guilty, '*the public presumed ignorant of the little deceit practised upon it;*'[1] in which case, it may be hoped nothing in Mr. Mill's 'ethical system' precludes him from clearly seeing, that the effect upon the public would be precisely the same as if the *real* criminal had suffered. *This* clause I inserted for Mr. Mill's special behoof, as remembering his criticism of M. Cousin on this very point (vide *Logic*, vol. ii. chap. 'Fallacies of Observation');[2] but it seems I might

[1] *Mill and Carlyle*, p. 56—the *only* passage which to this subject has reference.

[2] Mr. Mill's reasoning, as against M. Cousin, seems not quite so conclusive as might be wished; inasmuch as in correcting what he calls a fallacy of overlooking,' he himself proceeds to commit one. He *a little* overlooks the fact, that it could never be *as* innocent, but solely *as* guilty—though indeed erroneously supposed so—that an innocent man could be punished. As, however, Mr. Mill could not fail to be entirely pleased with his own argument, I deemed it as well to evade it by inserting the clause as above—with such result as we see.

have spared myself the trouble, Mr. Mill being pleased, as we see, to ignore it. Perhaps, now that his attention is called to it, he 'may be able to see' that the light insinuation of scorn in his 'being of opinion apparently' had, after all, as regards 'the innocent person,' and that *other* innocent person, myself, no very particular point in it. Such point as it really has, seems rather to threaten Mr. Mill himself, than to look for me deadly. Were I in the least disposed—as emphatically I say I am *not*—to 'insinuate bad faith' in Mr. Mill, might I not *here* do something more than 'insinuate' that Mr. Mill's reading public has more or less reason to complain of 'a little deceit practised upon it'? But distinctly nothing of the kind would I permit myself to say or insinuate. All that I venture to say is—that it is a pity Mr. Mill should either not have read this clause, or have forgotten it in writing his criticism.

With 'the madman' it does not seem to me that Mr. Mill succeeds greatly better than we have seen him do with 'the innocent person.' Let us look a little at his dealings with him. 'As to the madman 'Mr. Alexander asks—"How should the state of '"mind of the maniac, as unamenable to motive, any '"way affect the efficacy of our hanging him for '"murder, as a means to deter others from murder?" 'Mr. Alexander has really no claim to be answered, 'until he has got a step or two beyond this. Perhaps,

'however, he may be able to see that all the deter-
'ring effect which hanging can produce on men who
'are amenable to motive, is produced by hanging
'men who are amenable to motive.'

I shall never be able to see this; Mr. Mill, at this point, among others, is somewhat too 'advanced' a thinker for me; and he must come 'a step or two' back, before agreement between us is possible. As regards 'deterring effect,' it will be evident, I believe, to every one who has not some argument or 'ethical system,' in the interest of which to deny it, that the hanging of a maniac for murder would be equally efficacious with that of a sane man; as not any whit less suggestive of the grim *tu quoque*, for Bill Sykes and his compeers, the soul of the deterrent influence. As to madness in its proper nature, amenability to motive, or unamenability, what know these thousands of unwashed blockheads, for whose moral edification such amiable spectacles are exhibited? Absolutely no more than if they were all medical experts! What they *do* with sufficient sharpness know, however, is that the man has committed murder, and that before their very eyes he is being hanged for it. The deuce is in it, if this does not serve as a pretty impressive reminder of the further saving knowledge, otherwise vaguely conveyed to them, that if *they also* commit murder, they will also surely be hanged for it. What was previously an abstract proposition seems here

translated into the concrete for them, in terms of rather formidable emphasis. And will Mr. Mill, with full deliberation, assert that complete sanity in the sufferer is essential in order that this should be the case; that the least little dash of insanity in him would suffice utterly to *preclude* the associations which would otherwise be formed in the mind between the *one* fact of murder, and the *other* fact, of being hanged for it? Can it possibly be any part of Mr. Mill's 'Association Philosophy' to assert such a thing as *this?* So far is Mr. Mill's notion of non-effectiveness in the hanging of a madman, from being the self-evident axiom he assumes it, that the very reverse might with some plausibility be argued. In as far as the fact of the madness was at all considered, it could not but suggest, even to these not very bright minds, more or less of mitigation in the offence; their natural sense would be sure to be, that, though indeed he had murdered his wife—who possibly deserved no less—the poor devil was being rather hardly used for it; and the inference, as obvious, would be nearly sure to occur, that if such is the rigour of the law, that, with the plea of madness in his favour, *he* is not allowed to escape, by so much the less, in the like case, will *they* be allowed to escape, for whom no such plea is to be offered. From this point of view, it might even be urged, that as regards deterring effect, there is an element of impressiveness in the

hanging of a maniac, not present in that of the sane man. Supposing a strong feeling in the spectators, that on the ground of insanity or another ground, the criminal *ought not* to be hanged; would it be their sure or probable inference from the fact that, right or wrong, he *was* hanged, that they in the like case, *would not be?* Either Mr. Mill supposes this, or he does *not.* If he *does* suppose it, he will not get any one to agree with him. If he does *not* suppose it, what has become of his argument?

In any case, it will scarcely, I should think, be pretended by Mr. Mill, that our *sole* reason for not hanging maniacs, as we do sane men, is our scepticism as to whether our doing so,—as in the other case we assume,—would have tendency to deter others from the crime on the scaffold expiated. Yet this would be needed for his argument. In the sentence by Mr. Mill cited, I was combating his *dictum* that 'the 'justice of punishment has nothing to do with the 'state of mind of the offender; *farther than as this* '*may affect the efficacy of punishment as a means to its* '*end.*' In answer to *this* it was, that I instanced the case of the maniac, whose 'state of mind' we *do* most carefully take account of, on a ground, as I ventured, and still venture to surmise, of mere *Justice* to the wretch not morally to be held criminal; and I said that as to the other ground of 'protection to society,' he would, equally well with a saner man, exemplify

the terrors of the law. Mr. Mill, in denying this, is also bound to deny that there is any *other* ground of our minute and extreme scrupulosity as to the sanity of capital criminals, than a doubt as to whether the hanging of the insane would have *any* deterring efficacy. Mr. Mill is perhaps capable of denying this, as he finds it essential to his argument, but scarcely, I should really hope, otherwise.[1]

[1] As to the sole other assignable ground—not in the above alluded to—on which the éxecution of a maniac might be held to have some tendency to defeat its object, as enlisting the sympathies of the public *against* the law and in favour of its victim, not thus *annulling*, indeed, yet possibly in some degree *disturbing*, the salutary associations between crime and its punishment—it was not here necessary to allude to it; inasmuch as Mr. Mill is plainly *here* debarred from assigning it, the supposed public feeling in the matter being excited by nothing intelligible, save a sense of the brute *injustice* of hanging a man 'the state of whose mind' fatally determined him to crime.

VI.

NOTE—PAGE 580.

'The force of this argument[1] is attested by the straits to which my most persevering antagonist, Mr. Alexander, is reduced by it.'

In replying to Mr. Mill's argument here, I was certainly not *conscious*, at least, of being reduced to any particular strait; in truth, no passage in his whole Chapter seemed to me to admit of so easy and conclusive a confutation as this which he so much relies on. Let us see whether Mr. Mill, in his rejoinder, be not himself reduced to some little strait of difficulty.

'Mr. Alexander finds himself obliged to say, that "could we have positive assurance" in the case of such people, "that

[1] 'I ask any one who thinks that the justice of punishment is not 'sufficiently vindicated by its being for the protection of just rights, how 'he reconciles his sense of justice to the punishment of crimes committed 'in obedience to a perverted conscience? Ravaillac and Balthasar Gerard 'did not regard themselves as criminals, but as heroic martyrs. If they 'were justly put to death, the justice of punishment has nothing to do 'with the state of mind of the offender, farther than as this may affect 'the efficacy of punishment as a means to its end. It is impossible to 'assert the justice of punishment for crimes of fanaticism, on any other 'ground than its necessity for the attainment of a just end. If that is 'not a justification, there is no justification. All other imaginary justi-'fications break down in their application to this case.'—*Mill on Hamilton*, p. 580.

" their outrage of the obligation to respect life was solely an act " of self-sacrifice to what they considered a higher and more " sacred one," we should be obliged to admit that their doom " was not just in the particular instance." This is very well, but we want practice as well as theory. Would you hang them? Mr. Alexander makes a halting half-admission that he would. " A dubious point of justice—dubious because the " true motive of the act must always remain obscure—may here " be allowed to be over-ridden by a plain and potent man- " date of expediency." Mr. Alexander, therefore, would hang men, when it is doubtful whether they deserve it, would hang them for what " may really have been an act of sublime virtue." But what is the amount of real dubiousness in cases like these? Of all acts which a man can do, those by which he knowingly sacrifices his own life, sometimes with the addition of horrible torments, are the clearest from suspicion of all motives but honest ones. Mr. Alexander talks of Brutus and Charlotte Corday; but I am content with Ravaillac. Is there the smallest reason to doubt that Ravaillac's " outrage of the obligation to respect life" was an " act of self-sacrifice," to what in his opinion was " a higher and more sacred one"? What motive had Ravaillac for his abominable action except a supposed duty to God, and did he not deem this his highest and most sacred duty? As for Mr. Alexander's hint that such a man, if not culpable in the act, was " culpable in the perversion of his conscience which led to it;" it is the old odious assumption of persecutors, that acts which they cannot show to have been wicked in intention, must have originated in previous

wickedness. The act of Ravaillac simply originated in false teaching, coming to him from the same quarter from which had come most of the good teaching which he had received through life. It came from the fountain of goodness, not of wickedness.'

It would in all cases be well that citations in inverted commas should be quite punctilious in accuracy, not only *verbally*, as given, but as giving the *whole* meaning of the author. Having said that, in the case of such heroic sinners for conscience' sake, without considering the doom awarded them *just* 'as '*deserved*, or due to their deed, considered in itself, and 'as an isolated act,' we should yet 'on obvious grounds of general expediency *acquiesce* in it,' I further said—'*justifiable*, we should call it in the general, not *just* 'in the particular instance;' and I proceeded to assign as the ground on which we should hold it justifiable, that 'such whimsical heroes were inconvenient, *inas-* '*much as no society could afford to grow a succession of* '*them*.' Had not Mr. Mill, in quoting the clause, 'not *just* in the particular instance,' seen fit to suppress the '*justifiable* in the general' which precedes it, with the previous statement of 'acquiescence,' he could scarce have represented as a 'halting half-admission,' what is really as frank and explicit as it seems possible for words to make it; or desiderated 'practice as well as theory,' seeing he already had both. 'Would you

hang them?' Certainly—I had already indicated, on clear social grounds stated, which I should have thought to Mr. Mill particularly pleasing and satisfactory. 'Would hang them for what may really have been an act of sublime virtue?' Certainly—again I answer; as before I had plainly implied. I would not balk the sublime virtue by defrauding it of its dues expected. Mr. Mill a little seems to forget that solely by reason of its exercise under a positive *certainty* of being hanged for it, is the virtue at all a sublime one. I would permit it to be as sublime as Mr. Calcraft could possibly make it.

Again—'But what is the amount of real dubious-'ness,' etc. etc. etc.? I should not have thought it possible that Mr. Mill could so miss, as he has here done, the point of an opponent's argument. There is not, so far as we *know*, the smallest 'reason to doubt 'that Ravaillac's act was one, as it professed to be, of 'supposed duty to God.' But let us suppose a case. Suppose Ravaillac to have had a pretty wife, or—seeing he was a priest—let me rather say, a pretty mistress (it may be hoped that, in a Protestant country, this suggestion will be well received, as certifying the piety of the writer), and suppose the gallant Henry to have got his eye upon her. There seems not 'the smallest reason to doubt,' he would forthwith have proceeded to seduce her. Ravaillac would *then* have had a deadly private wrong to

avenge; and, as to allege what Mr. Mill would call the 'honest motive' would needs have involved some compromise of professional character, he might very well have seen fit, on a point of *esprit de corps*, to compass his end under the mask of a public religious duty. Can Mr. Mill fail to see that such cases might frequently occur; and that to accord immunity to acts of violence which could allege for themselves some lofty motive of conscience, would be simply to insure their frequency, and sap the very basis of society? Sheltered under the zeal for God, which would no doubt be loud upon their lips, men might without scruple proceed upon the devil's work, in the venting of their basest malignity. Hackston of Rathillet is a historical instance somewhat in point, who, having, on his own account, a quarrel with Archbishop Sharpe, when the old man was under the daggers, stood apart with his cloak devoutly drawn over his lips, lest the justice of the Lord being executed should take taint of his personal bitterness. But all men are not so scrupulous as the pious Hackston; on which ground—were there no other—it would be plainly preposterous, as merely a premium on crime, to make exception in favour of criminals for conscience' sake, so called. *Such* was my meaning when I spoke of 'a dubious point of justice—dubious, '*because the true motive of the act must always remain* '*obscure*;' and I should not have thought it could

possibly need explanation, had it not been so totally missed by Mr. Mill, in his 'clearest from suspicion of all motives but honest ones.' So totally has he missed my meaning here, that it is pretty plainly from my speaking of 'a *dubious* point of justice,' that he has inferred in my mind *dubiety* as to whether I would hang such culprits, and out of what was clear and explicit, has coined for me his 'halting half-admission.' If he will once more glance at the passage, Mr. Mill will see that the point of dubiety spoken of was one which suggests not the *hanging* of the culprit, but the *sparing* him; and probably not even in the interest of an argument or a pet theory, is Mr. Mill prepared to maintain that to hang a man and to spare him are identical, or even reconcilable, propositions.

Again—'Mr. Alexander talks of Brutus and Char-'lotte Corday; but I am content with Ravaillac.' I also, for that matter, am content with Ravaillac; probably a heroic conscientious kind of creature, whom one regrets it should have been at once necessary and proper to extirpate; but on whom—as no doubt dying under the usual consoling convictions of the martyr, that in having his bowels plucked out and exhibited to him, he was becoming 'the seed of the Church,' and securing for his persecutors a very evil future indeed—it is not necessary to waste compassion. But really, what does this turn of Mr. Mill's amount to? I am content with my own instances, and

decline to consider those adduced in reply by my opponent! When I asked—'Was Charlotte Corday '*justly* put to death, in the sense that she *deserved* her 'doom?' if Mr. Mill condescended at all to take notice of me, he was surely bound to give me an answer. Provisionally, I had ventured to answer *for him* pretty confidently—'Mr. Mill *will not say so.*' If Mr. Mill *could* have repudiated the moral judgment thus attributed to him, is it not obvious he would have done so, seeing that if he *cannot* repudiate it he must admit his whole argument collapsed? Not being able to repudiate it—as I venture to surmise he was not—it was no doubt natural enough for him to say—Charlotte Corday! hum! ha! hum! I quite decline to consider her; if you please, 'I am content with Ravaillac;' but readers will perhaps agree with me in thinking this not a very cogent line of argument. Which of us seems the more 'reduced to straits' here, I leave it to others to determine.[1]

[1] Of all such cases as those here considered, Ravaillac, Balthasar Gerard, Brutus, Charlotte Corday, Orsini, *id genus omne*—what is to be said is that under the legal enactment the punishment of the crime is *justified*, the very existence of society being imperilled were such actions to be left unpunished. As to the actual *criminality* of the acts from the point of view of the operator, and the *Justice* of the punishment, as *deserved*, there is positively nothing to be said with even a pretence to scientific accuracy. According to the theory we may form of his motives, Brutus was either the sublimest of patriots, or the most degraded of scoundrels (one's own easy notion is, that he was almost certainly a little of *both*). So of Charlotte Corday! a touching and heroic creature doubtless—with the sincerest detestation of Marat, and

Further, it was—as before noted—in answer to Mr. Mill's *dictum* in *this* passage, that 'the justice of 'punishment has nothing to do with the state of 'mind of the offender,' etc., that I instanced the case of the maniac, whose 'state of mind' we *do* most carefully take account of. Mr. Mill, in reply, is forced, as we have seen, to maintain that, by the punishment *under the law*, of a maniac for murder, sane men would not in the least impressively be reminded that all men, sane or insane, will be punished if they commit murder; that murder *will inevitably by law be punished*. It seems to me, in the light of what I have already said as to this, that the person, maintaining so hopeless a proposition in order to defend his argument, is 'reduced' to rather desperate 'straits' in defending it.

One word as to another little point, though perhaps

perhaps a little French rage for notoriety. How much of this last there may have been, would Mr. Carlyle undertake to inform us? In brief, each of such cases must be separately adjudicated on by the moralist; and there is room for endless diversity of opinion as to whether the punishment might be *just*, in the sense of its being *deserved*. But that in every such case it is *justifiable* from the point of view of the legalist, and on larger social considerations, no one will be found to deny. Mr. Mill's whole argument here proceeds on an identification of the legally and socially *justifiable* with the morally *just* or *deserved*; than which no two notions can be more distinctly discriminated. And throughout this whole section of his argument, the same thing is to be noted. Should he wish, in the next edition of his *Logic*, to further illustrate the 'Fallacy of Confusion,' which arises in the abuse of paronymous words, he could not do better than refer to this chapter of his own. It is a positive *mine* of such instances.

as merely personal, and no way affecting the argument, it not much deserves attention. 'As for Mr. 'Alexander's hint that such a man, if not culpable in 'the act, was "culpable in the perversion of his con- 'science that led to it," it is the old odious assump- 'tion of persecutors, that acts which they cannot 'show to have been wicked in intention, must have 'originated in previous wickedness.'

Mr. Mill uses somewhat strong language here, and, though it does not the least irk me, who am much of Benedick's mind as to such 'paper-bullets of the brain,' yet as the imputation conveyed is precisely of the sort under which I should be least willing to lie, a word or two of explanation may not be amiss. When we speak of 'a perverted conscience,' we may mean, with Mr. Mill here, a *mis-educated* conscience, the lapse of which 'originates in false teaching;' or we may mean a conscience *self*-perverted in the persistence of the evil will. This last it is, I think, which the phrase of itself most readily suggests. Of *this* I was thinking when I penned the clause to Mr. Mill so odious, and Mr. Mill will probably admit that, taken in this connexion, it loses some little of its offensiveness. That thus interpreted, what I wrote—except in as far as we suppose that intervolution of the two modes of perversion, which is not an unfrequent phenomenon—has any clear pertinence to the cases which Mr. Mill instantly proceeded to adduce,

I do not of course assert. Mr. Mill, without discrimination, having spoken of 'a perverted conscience,' I caught at the notion of perversion as it occurred to me, and did not stay to inquire curiously whether Mr. Mill's instances of Ravaillac, and the like, fell precisely under that notion; neither, for anything it mattered in the argument, was it the least necessary I should. From defect of precise definition on either side, Mr. Mill and I have here been firing across one another. It is my hope that, on withdrawing my obnoxious clause as simply irrelevant to the discussion, I may cease, in the eyes of Mr. Mill, to be the odious persecuting ruffian I should not wish him to continue to suppose me.

VII.

NOTE—PAGE 582.

[*Original Note.*—'Several of Sir W. Hamilton's admissions are strong arguments against the alleged self-evident connexion between free-will and accountability. We have found him affirming that a volition not determined by motives "would, if conceived, be conceived as morally worthless;" that "the free acts of an indifferent, are morally and "rationally as worthless as the pre-ordained passions of a "determined will;" and that "it is impossible to see how "a cause, undetermined by any motive, can be a rational, "moral, and accountable cause." If all this be so, there can be no intuitive perception of a necessary connexion between free-will and morality; it would appear, on the contrary, that we are naturally unable to recognise an act as moral, if it is, in the sense of the theory, free.']

[*Third Edition.*—'Mr. Alexander (p. 80) actually thinks that in these passages, Sir W. Hamilton is "asserting the determination of the will by motives;" and cannot believe that he intended "to assert an absolute commencement as "the mode under which freedom, though inconceivable, "has yet to be believed;" since this "would have been to "rush with his eyes open on the staring contradictory of a "thing at once caused and uncaused." Yet presently after

he himself charges Sir W. Hamilton's doctrine with requiring belief in two contrary inconceivables. In the present case, it only requires a belief in one of them, an absolute or uncaused commencement. Mr. Alexander does not lay claim to much knowledge of Sir W. Hamilton; and certainly no one who understood what that philosopher, and most others who discuss this question, mean by "to determine" could fail to see that with him the determination of the will by motives means Determinism, or, as it is commonly called, Necessity.']

My knowledge of Hamilton's philosophy is, I confess, of the slightest; but before venturing to write on this subject, I took care to read, with what seemed to me sufficient attention, that very small portion of his writings in which it is expressly treated of; and I *do* 'actually think,' strange as it may seem to Mr. Mill, that he does not, in asserting Freedom, *intend* to deny motives, or hold, as Mr. Mill throughout makes him do, that 'volitions are emancipated from causation altogether' (Note, p. 554). From confusion and embarrassment, it is impossible, I fear, to relieve Hamilton's desultory Notes on this subject; but there is no difficulty whatever in fixing the doctrine at which he *aims*—which is one of 'conciliation,' involving belief in Freedom on the one hand, in Determinism, or Necessity[1] on the other. (What *else* than 'Determin-

[1] Can it be needful formally to explain, that by the word Necessity, as here used, no more is meant than Causation? Nobody is stupid

ism' Mr. Mill can imagine I suppose Hamilton to mean by 'the determination of the will by motives,' I need not stay to inquire; Mr. Mill certainly pays me no compliment in thinking that I 'fail to see' that determination means determination.)

At page 555 of Mr. Mill's book, we find him writing —'The inconceivability of the Free-will doctrine is 'maintained by our author (Hamilton), not only on 'the general ground just stated (of its involving an 'absolute commencement), but on the further and '*special* ground that the *will is determined by motives.*' After this, it seems almost a little inconsistent in Mr. Mill to represent Hamilton as *denying* motives. Not to insist on this—elsewhere, we find Hamilton writing —'Voluntary conation is a faculty which *can only* be 'determined to energy through *a pain or a pleasure*— 'through an estimate of the relative worth of objects.' Through a pain or a pleasure; that is, by 'a desire or aversion,' Mr. Mill's own definition of 'a motive.' Could Hamilton, had he desired, even with emphasis, to do it, have proclaimed more clearly than as here he does, 'the determination of the will by motives'? Mr. Mill himself 'actually' quotes this—'So difficult 'is it to escape from this fact' (the suggestion of Necessity from 'our collective experience of life') 'that Sir

enough to suggest belief at once in Freedom, and in Necessity defined as excluding it. *These* are contradictories. Freedom and Causation are admitted contraries, or irreconcilable opposites; they have never yet, that I know of, been shown to be contradictory.—(*Vide* p. 139, *seq.*)

'W. Hamilton himself says'—as above. Let any one turn to the passage (*Lectures*, i. 188), and he will see that Hamilton is not wishing to *escape* from anything, but stating, with entire simplicity, a fact which it will presently appear he could not possibly intend to deny. Elsewhere, again, we find him writing—'Were we 'even to admit as *true* what we cannot think as *pos-* 'sible, still the doctrine of a *motiveless volition* would 'be *only casualism;* and the *free* acts of an indifferent, 'are *morally* and rationally as *worthless*, as the pre- 'ordained passions of a determined will.' Does Mr. Mill really suppose that Hamilton, in asserting Freedom, as an implication of man's moral nature, meant to *announce* the very doctrine, by himself thus expressly *denounced*, as 'only casualism,' and as such, *contradictory of that moral nature*, not less than the pre-ordination of Necessity itself? 'Motiveless volitions' are here by Hamilton provisionally assumed, only to be *set aside as nugatory.* Is it reasonable then to suppose them included in his positive doctrine? That in point of fact they were *not* so, by *intention* at least, admits of the clearest proof.

Hamilton, in the 'Appendix' to his *Discussions*, furnishes us, on the subject of Causality (and Freedom), with some 'hints of an undeveloped Philosophy, which he is confident is founded on truth.' And this *confidence* he in great part attributes to his 'finding in 'this system a centre and conciliation for the most

'opposite of philosophical opinions.' *What* does Mr. Mill suppose the '*opposite* philosophical opinions' which Hamilton's doctrine, as it lives in his own mind, 'conciliates'? If the opposite opinions conciliated be not, on the one hand, Freedom as excluding Causation, on the other, Causation as involving a denial of Freedom, *what*, in Mr. Mill's notion, *are* the opinions which Hamilton intends to conciliate? Mr. Mill's philosophical ingenuity is admitted great; but, unless it is greater than I take it to be, it will scarce avail him for an answer to this question. Further, we find Hamilton remarking—'This scheme proves, 'moreover, that no difficulty emerges in Theology 'which had not previously emerged in Philosophy,' and instantly afterwards—'Specially, in its doctrine 'of Causality, this philosophy brings us back from 'the aberrations of modern theology to the truth and 'simplicity of the ancient church. It is here shown 'to be as irrational as irreligious, on the ground of 'human understanding, to deny either, *on the one* '*hand*, the foreknowledge, predestination, and free 'grace of God, as, *on the other*, the free-will of man; 'that we should *believe both, and both in unison*, 'though unable to comprehend either, even apart.' And 'this conciliation,' he immediately after says, 'is of the things to be believed, not understood;' while further on we find him speak of 'the total inability of 'man to *conceive the union* of *what he should believe*

'*united*.' In the light of all this, the essential doctrine of Hamilton is not for one instant to be mistaken. 'No difficulty,' he says, 'emerges in Theology, 'which had not previously emerged in Philosophy.' The difficulty involved in God's predestination and foreknowledge, as related to human Freedom, he regards as *identical* with that involved in Causation, in the same inscrutable relation. The two difficulties are, in his view of them, properly forms of the *same* difficulty. Now, the theological difficulty he adjusts by announcing of the two seeming irreconcilables, that we 'must believe *both*, and both in unison.' And the philosophical difficulty which he regards as the *same*, he cannot have *meant* to resolve *differently*. Consequently—and this becomes additionally clear in the light of the subsequent quotation from his favourite Jacobi—'The *union* of physical *Necessity* 'and moral *Freedom*, in one and the same being, is 'an absolutely incomprehensible fact; a miracle and 'mystery like to the creation'—it is not for an instant to be doubted, that the result in which Hamilton's mind *rested* was this—that Causes, or motives, on the one hand, human Freedom on the other, are alike to be admitted; that we 'must believe *both*, and both in unison;' and that 'this conciliation is of the things to be believed, not understood.' Moreover, when we find him writing in the 'fragments of a fuller discussion' appended in his final Note—'In fact, there is a

'curious conformity, if I may say so, between New-'ton's procedure and our own. Gravity is the great 'constitutive principle in the world of matter; whilst '*Causation* is the highest constitutive and Causality 'the highest regulative principle in the *worlds both of* '*matter and mind*'—Causation throughout 'the world of *mind*' being thus as decisively recognised as Gravity by Newton in the 'world of matter'—it becomes utterly impossible to maintain—as Mr. Mill is unhappy enough to attempt doing throughout—that, in the interest of Freedom, Hamilton intends to *deny Causation.* That this result in which his mind plainly reposed—of two things to be believed in as reconcilable, though to reconcile them our reason is impotent—he could have reached by any manipulation of the argument, as he constructs it in the light of his 'Philosophy of the Conditioned,' with its two 'con-'tradictory Inconceivables, *one* of which must be true, 'whilst *both* cannot,' may probably admit of doubt. Of the famous Hamiltonian 'Logic,' my knowledge is precisely—*nil;* and likely, I fear, to remain so. That, by doing something or other with the Predicate, Sir William could have walked round the flank of this difficulty, I am perfectly willing to believe; but meantime I do not quite see it; it seems meantime a little like Freedom, and easier to be believed than understood. *Here,* perhaps, there *was* a little point to be made against Hamilton; but Mr. Mill

has not made it; and failing to make *this* point, it does not appear that he has made any other to speak of. (How *could* he, indeed, have made any, his reasonings, nearly throughout, being based on so vital a misconception?) Not improbably Mr. Mill saw the point plainly enough; but likewise saw that he could not avail himself of it, and avail himself also of the *other* point, derived from 'motiveless volition,' and 'action for no reason in particular.' *One* of them he might have, but not *both;* and he chose the one which involved a direct misrepresentation of what is unmistakably shown to have been Hamilton's real doctrine. Mr. Mill's 'knowledge of Sir W. Hamilton,' as a mere matter of course, is almost infinitely greater than mine; but at this particular point, it does not seem to show to advantage.

It is to be admitted, however, that in attributing to Hamilton's doctrine of Freedom 'the emancipation of the will from Causes,' Mr. Mill is not wholly without excuse. When I wrote, 'Doubtless it is held by 'Hamilton, that Freedom, though *inconceivable,* as 'involving the impossible notion of an "absolute 'commencement," is yet as such to be believed; but 'it is only *as* an Inconceivable he claims our belief 'in it, not as an impossible "absolute commence-'ment," as Mr. Mill seems to suppose,' I considered I was justified in so doing, in the light of the context, as now adduced, which proves, as I think, beyond

dispute, that he cannot possibly have *intended* to enunciate the doctrine by Mr. Mill attributed to him. Rigorously interpret his deliverance, in the light of his 'Doctrine of the Conditioned,' and frankly, I admit, it lies exceedingly open to the interpretation by Mr. Mill put upon it. I don't say that in representing Hamilton, as in the interest of Freedom, denying Causes, Mr. Mill has *no case;* but I *do* say, that for Hamilton here, *as against him*, there is a case very much stronger; and I further say that Mr. Mill ought to have known this, had his 'knowledge of Sir W. Hamilton' been so greatly superior to mine as I should myself have been disposed to expect it.

To conclude—let me cite a passage which, in the light of Hamilton's express announcement of his doctrine as a 'conciliation of opposite philosophical opinions,' seems to me pretty conclusive. Having remarked that *his* doctrine alone (as 'conciliatory' and recognising a truth on either side—this must needs be his meaning) affords 'a solution of the problem 'offered in the condition of *exact equilibrium*, in which 'the controversy has continued,' Hamilton proceeds—'*Previous* philosophers have held,' etc. 'Those philo-'sophers who embraced the alternative of Necessity 'virtually extenuated, as delusive, those ultimate data 'of intelligence, which attribute to man, as author or 'master of his actions, a moral agency, responsibility, 'liberty—an undetermined freedom to initiate action.

'Those philosophers, again, who embraced the alter-
'native of Liberty, virtually extenuated, as delusive,
'in so far as our volitions are concerned, that neces-
'sity of intelligence which constrains us to seek the
'commencement of every event, external or internal,
'in some antecedent, itself determined by a higher
'antecedent. The one class did not attempt to render
'comprehensible an infinite series of relative or de-
'termined commencements; the *other* class did not
'attempt to render comprehensible an absolute or
'undetermined initiative. *Both* implicitly charged
'reason,' etc.

Is it to be denied that Hamilton *here* means to discriminate himself from *both* these 'classes of previous philosophers,' 'extenuating as delusive,' neither, on the one hand, the ultimate data which guarantee *Freedom*, nor, on the other, 'so far as our volitions are concerned,' that 'necessity of intelligence which constrains us' to admit Causation, and to fix these 'opposite opinions' of Freedom and Necessity, by 'previous philosophers' held exclusive each of the other, as those in his own doctrine harmonized, or 'conciliated' in *belief*, though not in *intelligence?* It is not, I should say, even by Mr. Mill to be denied. What then of Mr. Mill's 'knowledge of Sir W. Hamilton,' in making him deny Causation? All that seems *here* to be said of it is, that one hopes it is greater *elsewhere*.

It is not uninstructive to note, that out of this very

passage, which seems to seal Mr. Mill's condemnation, he could perfectly well pick some sort of *quasi*-justification of himself. Hamilton *does* here certainly *seem* to define Liberty as 'an *undetermined* freedom to initiate action,' 'an absolute or *undetermined* initiative,' but all he can intelligently be held to mean is, that it admits not of being construed to thought except as this form of *Inconceivable.* That under *this* form it is that he means to demand belief in it, cannot for an instant be maintained; for, almost in the same breath, he implies as 'undelusive' 'the Necessity of intelligence, which constrains us' to admit volitions *determined.* Volitions are at once determined and *un*determined, caused and *un*caused!! Are these staring contradictories 'the opposite philosophical opinions' of which Hamilton intends to announce, that 'we must believe *both*, and both in unison'? It may be so; but *if* so, he was one of the merest blockheads who ever put pen to paper; and it was surely unnecessary for Mr. Mill to write a whole big book about him as the philosopher of all his school, 'the ablest, the most clear-sighted, and the most candid.' These are complimentary expressions, *one* at least of which, at this point, I must hesitate to apply to Mr. Mill. Candid he is, I do believe, even when it might not quite appear; nobody ever questioned his superb intellectual ability; as to his 'clear-sightedness,' I should just here have thought rather more of

it had he recognised as mere rash inadvertencies of expression and exposition—in what is professedly no more than a series of mere fragments tumbled out of a note-book—the things he has seen fit to represent, as conveying to us Hamilton's matured and deliberate doctrine.

Mr. Mill says, that while declining to believe that Hamilton could mean to 'rush with his eyes open on 'the staring *contradictory* of a thing at once caused 'and uncaused,' I myself proceed to 'charge his doctrine with requiring belief in *contrary* inconceivables.' In doing so, I charge it with nothing which he himself does not proclaim, in saying that it specially approves itself to him as 'conciliating the most *opposite* philosophical opinions.' These can positively be nothing but Freedom as inconceivable, and Causation, which, in its infinite regress, it is his whim to likewise present as such; in other schemes held reciprocally destructive, in *his* 'conciliated, though this conciliation is of the things to be believed, not understood.' If *not* these, *what* are the 'opposite philosophical opinions' which, in his Doctrine of Causation and Freedom—sketched entirely in the rough—Hamilton proposes to conciliate? No answer on the general question can in the least be accepted from Mr. Mill as valid which does not include an answer to *this* question; and this question Mr. Mill will never be able to answer.

If these contraries, or opposites—in the sense that

logically we are unable to reconcile them—'both of which and both in unison' are, as *result* of Hamilton's reasoning, to be 'believed,' might seem in some part of the *process* of it, to figure as the Contradictories of the Philosophy of the Conditioned, 'one of which must be true, while *both* cannot,' this, as I said, is a confusion on Hamilton's part, on which Mr. Mill was entitled, if he chose, to animadvert, as on Hamilton's other confusions. What clearly he was *not* entitled to do was to falsify, for the sake of his points about 'motiveless volition' and 'action for no reason in particular,' the doctrine in which Hamilton's mind plainly rested, and which, beyond all question, he would have held himself bound to maintain.

Of the confusion—if it really be so, as to which I am by no means confident—in which Hamilton is here involved, enough is perhaps said—the quite incondite and fragmentary character of his jottings on this subject being looked to—if we say as in the passage Mr. Mill is here criticising, that 'his reconstruction of the argument in the light of his Philosophy of the Conditioned, has really done it no 'great service.' A man who has business in London gets into the wrong coach, and finds himself deposited at Exeter; what then? he next morning puts himself in the right one; he is in due time deposited in London, and claims that his conduct shall be interpreted throughout in the light of his manifest inten-

tion. So with Hamilton here—as to where he really means to go, there can not be a shadow of doubt; as to whether he got into the right coach to take him there, in working from the 'Philosophy of the Conditioned,' there may reasonably be difference of opinion.

VIII.

NOTE—PAGE 586.

'THIS vital truth in moral Psychology, that we can improve our character, *if we will*, is a great stumbling-block both to the "Inquirer" and Mr. Alexander. They maintain that the fact makes no difference at all, and that the Causation of human actions is exactly the same thing with Modified Fatalism. 'Both he and *Mr. Alexander protest vehemently, Mr. Alexander at great length, that the Causation doctrine is as incompatible with Free-will as Fatalism is.* As if any one had denied that. In the very next paragraph, when arguing against Kant, I expressly affirmed it.'

Mr. Mill, in one of his 'Notes,' says of Professor Mansel and the 'Inquirer,' that 'they could not have 'worse understood his argument if they had never read 'it.' Of Mr. Mill I take the liberty to say the same thing *here.* Had I sought 'vehemently and at great length,' as Mr. Mill alleges, to show that his 'Causation doctrine' is incompatible with the Freedom expressly denied in it, I must have been a blunderer indeed. The idea of my seeking, as Mr. Mill's *opponent*, to prove to him 'vehemently and at great length'

the very thing, which throughout and with some vehemence, he *asserts*, seems really a little too ludicrous. To attribute the merest idiocy to one's adversary is an easy method of confuting him, and not—with Mr. Mill—an unusual one. 'It is the main object of this 'paper to inquire in how far Mr. Mill can *be held to* '*prosper in his attempt to harmonize our practical moral* '*instincts with his speculative tenet of Necessity.*' *Thus* it was, that my purpose was at starting defined; and on the whole, it was carried out pretty steadily, though not, as I speedily came to see, without a certain amount of blunder and misapprehension, which I am obliged to Mr. Mill for overlooking. To identify Mr. Mill's doctrine of Causation with Fatalism, not in the denial of Freedom—by both expressly denied—but in its bearing on the Moral Responsibility of man—in regard of which Mr. Mill's distinction between the two doctrines seemed to me, and still seems, a distinction utterly illusory—was almost the *sole* object of my little Essay. What I *did* maintain 'vehemently and at some length,' was *not*—as Mr. Mill here makes me do—that his 'Causation doctrine' is '*incompatible* with Free-will,' but that, as distinguished from Fatalism, in this particular regard, it is really in point of fact *identical* with it—a doctrine of Freedom[1]—*in dis-*

[1] Vide *Mill and Carlyle.*—'Observations these highly edifying doubt-'less, but as used by a Necessitarian, or unconditional Causationist, 'conclusive of his mere bewilderment. Mr. Mill, it seems, is not the

guise. That Mr. Mill's 'doctrine of Causation,' as distinct from a doctrine of Fate, is a miserable mongrel, neither philosophic fish nor flesh, and *not* in any thorough-going logical way a 'Doctrine of Causation' at all, rigorously prosecuted to its results! *This* is what I maintained, and shall meantime, for anything I see in his well-meant endeavours to make a convert of me, continue to maintain with quite undiminished confidence. Mr. Mill's doctrine of Causation is somewhat like his Utilitarianism; and finding itself in a strait, never scruples to worm its way out, by a dexterous surreptitious implication of the opposite doctrine denied. Probably, no thinker of Mr. Mill's deserved eminence, of the same strictness and severity of intellect (in genuine, unaffected admiration of Mr. Mill's consummate ability, in so far as I feel myself com-

'Necessitarian he supposes himself, but *a wild advocate of Freedom*' (pp. 102-103). 'Again, as we before said, he is not the Necessitarian 'he supposes himself, but *a frantic advocate of Freedom*' (p. 104). 'The 'candour of these admissions is admirable, but of course they come easy to 'Mr. Mill, who is really, as we have seen—though without as yet being 'aware of it—himself a *very ardent advocate of the Doctrine* (*of Free-'dom, to wit*) he thus celebrates' (pp. 117, 118). And in such passages is indicated the main scope of the little treatise. What, then, am I to think of Mr. Mill, in his making me 'maintain and protest vehemently,' that his doctrine is '*incompatible* with Free-will,' wherewith it is nearly throughout my express aim to *identify* it? Simply, that Mr. Mill, in doing me the honour to criticise me, has omitted, somehow or other, to do me the preliminary honour of reading me,—an operation commonly held essential in order to intelligent criticism.

petent to estimate it—which is really but a little way —I will not yield to even his most ardent admirers), ever showed himself habitually such an adept, in what I take leave to call the art of intellectual *smuggling*. I have denounced as plainly *contraband* Mr. Mill's 'Yes, 'if he really "*could not help*" it—that is, if it did not 'depend upon his *will*:'[1] and I should really like to know how a man like Mr. Mill could ever hope to pass through the Custom-house an article so distinctly

[1] Is it really necessary, in any formal way, to elaborate a point so obvious, as that a consistent doctrine of Causation—of *unconditional* Causation—leaves to us no more power to *help* our actions, good, bad, or indifferent, than if we were simply so much brute matter, involved in the chain of physical sequences? A man is determined to act *so*; to suppose him to *help* his action, is to suppose a difference in the effect; and therein a difference in the cause or antecedent, involving a difference in the whole previous chain of antecedents. Mr. Mill's distinct implication that—certain specified cases excepted, of physical constraint, etc.,—we can *help* our actions, is thus in the plainest contradiction with his own doctrine, and a quiet assumption of Freedom, in an argument professedly Necessitarian. Here, from his *Logic*, is a passage precisely parallel—'Human actions are never (except in some cases of 'mania) ruled by any one motive with such absolute sway that there is 'no room for the influence of any other. The causes, therefore, on which 'action depends are never *uncontrollable*; and any given effect is only '*necessary*, provided that the causes tending to produce it are not *con-* '*trolled*.' Suppose that the causes tending to produce it are *not* in point of fact *controlled*; the effect is *then* produced, and according to Mr. Mill himself, *necessarily* so (the reader will please to observe that the case, as thus put, includes every human thought, word, or deed, that can ever have taken place in the world). How then, were the causes controllable? On what possible terms—from the point of view of the Causationist—not involving the intrusion of *other* causes, a whole world of changed antecedents, and consequents, and solution of the causal continuity?

prohibited as *this*. That Mr. Mill, by *will* here explicitly to himself means Free-will, no one will of course assert. What might seem to be the state of the case is, that here, as elsewhere, he uses the word *will* quite vaguely and at random, not very distinctly meaning anything, but giving his argument the advantage of the associations with Freedom, which in most minds—including his own—obstinately continue to cling to it. If in stating his 'vital truth in moral 'Psychology, that we can improve our character, *if we* '*will*,' he does not allow himself the same laxity and license, nothing can be easier to show that his formula is utterly worthless, as discriminating his doctrine from a Fatalistic one.

And first,[1] to glance in some casual way at what Mr. Mill calls 'Modified Fatalism.' The Modified Fatalist 'holds, that our actions are determined by our will, 'our will by our desires, and our desires by the joint 'influence of the motives presented to us, and of our 'individual character; but that our character having 'been made for us, and not by us, we are *not respon-* '*sible for it, nor for the actions it leads to, and should* '*in vain attempt to alter them.*' Obviously, it is mainly

[1] Throughout more diffuse than I could have wished, I must *here* beg pardon of the reader for a diffuseness even greater than usual. The point at issue here—my former rapid remarks on which are flawed with serious error—is positively *central* to the whole discussion. As such, wishing to treat of it, as far as might be, exhaustively, I have chosen rather to be prolix than perfunctory.

in this *tail* of the definition, so to speak, that the *sting* lies. Elsewhere I have said of it that, as 'contingency clings to our conception of the future,' whether we believe in Free-will or in Fate—the thing which *will, or is to be,* being in either case, meantime, *for us* indeterminate—'should in vain *have attempted* to alter them,' might perhaps be the preferable way of putting it. Mr. Mill will scarcely allege, that in making so trivial an alteration as this, I 'break down a fundamental distinction,' or do more than merely simplify the statement by eliminating the element of contingency. This slight and surely inessential alteration supposed by Mr. Mill acquiesced in, is not he, from the point of view of the Causationist, shut up to acquiescence in it otherwise, or as *belief?* Most obviously he is; for the man to have successfully 'attempted to alter,' would have been to have *helped* his action; to have interpolated a new, *arbitrary*, or uncaused effect, therein disrupting and confounding the whole chain of causal sequences. It does not seem quite easy for Mr. Mill to escape from 'Modified Fatalism,' as in his own terms defined—unless, indeed, to say 'should in vain have attempted,' instead of 'should in vain attempt' be to 'break down a fundamental distinction.' Mr. Mill is, not improbably, quite capable, at a pinch, of asserting this; and it is not to be doubted, that should he do so, he would find a great many acute people to agree with him. Where-

fore, in case such a thing should occur, let us get back for an instant to Mr. Mill's 'should in vain *attempt* to alter them.' It is certain—*what is to be, will be*—and this alike for the believer in Free-will and the Fatalist. As Causationist, but not Fatalist, Mr. Mill expressly holds that, were *all* the causes known to us, and were our intelligence competent to deal with the complex *process* of them, we could confidently *predict* the *will be* of a man's action—say a month hence—in any particular emergency; *as* confidently as we predict that a stone, if detached from its support, will fall to the earth. *How* reconcile Mr. Mill's asserted power of *predicting* the man's action, with a power in the man to *alter* that action? Seems it not plain that, either Mr. Mill cannot, in such a case, *predict*, or that there can be no power in the man to *alter* the thing which Mr. Mill predicts? To successfully 'attempt to alter' would be to falsify Mr. Mill's prediction. If Mr. Mill, as Causationist and Prophet in the mood potential, be not a 'Modified Fatalist,' as defined in his own terms, there seems little doubt that, as accurate reasoner, he *ought* so to be. Professor Mansel, after all, then, was not quite so much out as Mr. Mill would have had us suppose him, when, in answer to Mr. Mill's 'no more than this '(assumed power of prediction) is contended for by 'any one but an Asiatic Fatalist,' he wrote—'And no 'more than this is needed to construct a system of

'Fatalism as rigid as any Asiatic can desire.' That there may be no doubt whatever as regards Mr. Mill's position assumed here, it may be well to refer—even at the risk of some redundancy—to the last sentence of the concluding paragraph of his chapter:—'Because something will certainly happen, if nothing is 'done to prevent it, they (the Fatalists) think it will 'certainly happen, whatever may be done to prevent 'it; in a word, they believe in *Necessity, in the only 'proper meaning of the term*—an issue *unalterable* by 'human efforts or desires.' From *this*, the doctrine of Necessity *proper*, or Fate, is contradistinguished Mr. Mill's 'ill-understood doctrine of *so-called* Necessity,' or 'true doctrine of Causation,' which includes, as of course we must suppose, a belief in issues *alterable* by human efforts and desires; and the distinction is announced a 'fundamental' one, which Professor Mansel is roundly rated for trying to 'break down.' We shall see, on a very little examination, that Mr. Mill himself has broken down dreadfully in trying to set it up. Take any human issue in the *past*, certain 'human efforts and desires' concurred to produce, *caused* it. By *what* human efforts or desires does Mr. Mill suppose it to have been by possibility *alterable?* Not surely by the efforts and desires which *caused* it. Mr. Mill cannot mean to maintain *this*. He must needs intend an implication of *other* efforts and desires which in point of fact *did* not cause *it*, and *could*

not cause anything else, seeing they did not exist; and if this implication be not to intrude *new* antecedents dependent on no *previous* antecedents, and into the 'true doctrine of Causation' to insinuate *free* origination, and the 'absolute commencement' of Hamilton, there has ceased to be virtue in Logic. Again, suppose the issue a *future* one! and future issues are, according to Mr. Mill, so *certain*, that—the conditions supposed given us—we could with absolute confidence *predict* them. Once more, by *what* 'efforts and desires' does Mr. Mill think this *certain* issue *alterable?* By the efforts and desires, which, as *cause* of the issue, we of course must foresee in foreseeing the issue? This can hardly be. By *other* 'efforts and desires,' then, which we do not foresee, for the admirable reason, that unless all sequence of Causation be annulled, we see them to be absurd and impossible? Mr. Mill is positively bound to maintain *this last.*

Could the proof be more clear, that between the doctrine of Fate, or *Necessity, in the only true meaning of the term*, and Mr. Mill's 'ill-understood doctrine of *so-called* Necessity,' or priceless 'true doctrine of Causation,' there is no distinction whatever? Irrefragably, Mr. Mill's 'doctrine of Causation,' in so far as it seeks to sever itself from a doctrine of Fate, or *Necessity is the only proper sense of the term*, becomes a *so-called* 'Doctrine of Causation,' or Doctrine of

Freedom *in disguise.* Seems it not deplorably evident, that Mr. Mill's 'ill-understood' doctrine of '*so-called* Necessity,' or Causation, is but poorly understood—by himself? No wonder it has puzzled other people a little!

To pass to the 'true doctrine of Causation,' as by Mr. Mill himself *discriminated* from that of Fate, given in his statement already quoted! 'The true 'doctrine of the Causation of human actions main-'tains, in opposition to this, that not only our conduct, 'but our character, is in part amenable to our will; 'that we can, by employing the proper means, 'improve our character; and that if our character is 'such that while it remains what it is, it necessitates 'us to do wrong, it will be just (expedient?) to apply 'motives which will necessitate us to strive for its 'improvement, and so emancipate ourselves from the 'other necessity. In other words, we are under a 'moral obligation to seek the improvement of our 'moral character.'

The dictum—not denied, I believe, by any one—that 'we can by employing the proper means improve our character,' is now again before us as 'this vital 'truth in Moral Psychology that we can improve our 'character, *if we will.*' (I shall admit the italics significant, when I find it alleged by a philosopher of the opposite school, that we can improve our character, *if we won't.*) As such, it claims our very particu-

lar attention. And some *separate* attention must also be given to Mr. Mill's *other* dictum, that 'the 'character is (in part) amenable to the will.' (As the merest matter of course, on grounds elsewhere stated, the 'in part' may be dropt as of no importance.) Mr. Mill is of course profoundly unaware, that these two dicta put forth by him *in the same sentence*, are in essential meaning *wide as the poles asunder*. Such, however, is the case; the first—Freedom of course denied—in no respect whatever distinguishing Mr. Mill's doctrine from that of Fate, the other being a plain implication of that of Free-will. This I proceed to show.

And, first—as to Mr. Mill's 'vital truth in Moral Psychology,' as, in relation to the moral problem, discriminating his Doctrine from one of 'Modified Fate.' That 'we can improve our character *if we will*,' is, I fancy, not denied by any one not also denying the equally important truth that *if we will*, we can *deteriorate* our character. But *how* this power possessed by us *through the will*, should any way alter the position, if over the *will itself*—as Mr. Mill of course holds—we have *no* power, quite declines to become obvious. To have no power over the *will* by which only the character can be modified, is plainly, to *have no power to modify the character*. It is absurd to say that over the *end* we have power, all power over the *means* being denied us. Wherefore, unless

by *will* here, Mr. Mill—as indeed is usual with him—means *free* will without being aware of it, he will, I fear, be obliged to admit that we cannot modify our character; that however our character may be modified, it is *really* modified *for* us; that even whilst a man's character *seems* to be modified '*by* him, as one of the intermediate agents,' it is, in the strictest sense, modified *for* him, as merely the helpless instrument through which an alien energy transmits itself along the infinite procession of causes. The *moral personality* of man is plainly, from this point of view, abolished.

We are thus, in terms of the reasoning as above—which, as *not mine*,[1] I venture to suppose unanswerable—'not morally responsible for our character, or for the actions it leads to.' Varying the statement a little—for it amounts to no more—this is otherwise sufficiently obvious. We have abundantly seen, that Mr. Mill, in implying that men can *help* their actions, does manifest outrage to his own professed doctrine, as Causationist. Given a particular action, Mr. Mill—though perhaps reluctantly—must admit that as the inevitable outcome of his character, the man could not possibly *help* it. Is Mr. Mill here capable of alleging—Oh! but he might have *improved* his character so as to be *able* to help it? Sincerely, one hopes *not*. For to improve or to deteriorate our

[1] David Hume—not I—is in point of fact responsible for it; see Note at close of the Discussion.

character is simply to *act* in some such way as may induce these respective results. And as Mr. Mill himself well says (criticising Kant, and as we see, in so doing, shearing his own legs away)—'There cannot 'be one theory for one class of actions and another 'theory for another.' If the man 'could not *help*' his bad action, as birth of his evil character, as little could he possibly *help* the series of previous actions, by which that character was developed to evil, and not to good. Consequently, under Mr. Mill's own—'Yes; if he really "could not help" acting as he did,' from which, as aforetime announced, and *now* with full deliberation repeated, he cannot with any grace retreat—the sinner is absolved from all moral responsibility, for his character alike and his actions.

I have thus *doubly* shown that Mr. Mill's *one* dictum, 'we can improve our character if *we will*,' cannot, if conjoined with denial of Freedom, be rationally, in its moral bearings, distinguished from a doctrine of Fate. I proceed to show, and show *doubly* (if only to symmetrize the discussion), that his *other* dictum—'the character is amenable to the will,' is, except as an implication of the *Freedom* denied, a form of words to which we can attach no rational meaning whatever. 'The *Character* is amenable to the *Will*!' Yet, plainly, there can be nothing in the *Will* which was not previously in the *Character*. The Character is a product of the Will,

the Will a product of the Character! Was there ever a more vicious circle? What are we really to make of Mr. Mill's 'the character is amenable to the *will*,' and modified by it, coupled with its converse, even vehemently held to by Mr. Mill, that the *will* is so wholly amenable to the character as to be its mere necessitated product? All that any one will ever be able to make of it is an announcement of a self-modifying character. This, in effect, or *nothing*, is the doctrine to which Mr. Mill is here committed. But how a self-modifying, or self-determining *character* is any whit more explicable than the self-determining *will*, to which his objection is insuperable, or indeed, is at all to be distinguished from it, Mr. Mill will find it not easy to explain. Oddly enough, Mr. Mill acutely sees this *point;* and on the very opposite page presses it, as against Kant. What he lacks the acuteness to see is, that in applying the scythe to Kant he most effectually, as we saw a little ago, *mows his own luckless legs off.* (Readers sufficiently interested in the subject are referred to the book itself, where they will find this novel operation in surgery in the most masterly manner performed.)

Again—is the *man* one thing; the *will* of the man *another* thing; and the *character* of the man a *third* thing? Are not rather the three terms, however superficially discriminated, fundamentally in meaning identical? We speak of a *bad character* as meaning a

bad man; and this, with really greater philosophical accuracy than in saying that such an one *has* a bad character. A character is not something external to, and *possessed* by the man, like a sum of money in his breeches' pocket; it is the veritable *man himself*, regarded from the point of view of the *moralist*. So likewise of the *Will*, which is not any kind of spiritual arm or leg, as it were, which the man makes *use* of as he does of these bodily members; but very literally 'the man willing' or operative in volitional act. *Vide* Hamilton—'The will is merely an abbreviated expression for the man willing.' That again, the character and the will, as each thus identified with the *man*, are really identical with each other, is sufficiently familiar to Mr. Mill, who (see *Logic*) quotes with approval Novalis, to the effect that 'a *character* is a completely fashioned *will*.' This being so—and the very slightest reflection will show it can be no otherwise—the *man*, the *character* of the man, and the *will* of the man being merely three words, in essential meaning the same, what of Mr. Mill's 'character amenable to the Will,' and modified by it? It is seen to be utterly without meaning, except as a man, will, or character, *self*-modifying, or otherwise —Free.[1]

[1] In addition to the difficulties really essential to it, this subject is constantly liable to be beset by others originating in the accumulation about it of terms almost inevitable to be made use of, but which yet

Of the doctrines of Freedom and Fate, we have thus in Mr. Mill's reasonings seen plenty; but of the *via media* announced as 'the true Doctrine of Causation,' as yet we have seen nothing. It has only been *heard of* from Mr. Mill, an oracle addressing us

are rationally superfluous. Such are *Will* and *Volition*, which are really no more than mere *words*, to which nothing in existence corresponds. Voluntary, as distinguished from *in*voluntary action, is simply action of which, as *motive*, we are *conscious;* and the *Will* can be nothing but the *man himself* operative in his conscious act. But so soon as, in current phrase, we begin to speak of the Will *of* the man—of the will as something which the man *has*—inevitably we are apt to forget this, and to lapse into grievous confusions. So also with *volition*, which—somewhat as Byron surmised that Junius was 'really, truly, *nobody at all*'—cannot be apprehended as *anything* distinct from the act, in which it appears—to use a strong metaphor—incarnate. Volition is no more than a *word* by which we have agreed to bridge over that chasm of unknown process, which intervenes between the man in the condition of desire or *motive*, and the man as he flashes into act. By the slightest attention, who will may convince himself that between the desire and the act there is no *intermediate mental state* corresponding to the term *volition*. The volition and the act are not, as Hamilton would have phrased it, 'numerically different.' Of the confusions not unlikely to arise in their being so considered, the following is a good instance (*Mill on Hamilton*)—'Direct power over my 'volitions, I am conscious of none. In common with one half of the 'psychological world, I am wholly ignorant of my possessing any such 'power.' Mr. Mill (*System of Logic*)—'Their will has no *direct power* except over *their own actions*.' (If Mr. Mill, to escape from a difficulty, is disposed to maintain that by '*their will*' here—the will of the men—he means anything different from the men themselves, as willing, it will be easy, on his saying what he means, to prove that he does not mean anything.) Thus, according to Mr. Mill, he has power over his *actions*, but over the necessary intermediates or means, called *volitions*, he has *no* power. How ever could Mr. Mill explain this except as a power of acting *without* volitions, yet *with* them, inasmuch as his acts are voluntary; of acting voluntarily at once and *in*voluntarily?

hitherto from the awful cloud of confusion. Let us see whether from the one point of view which remains, this oracle can be interpreted in any such way as would suit its oracular pretensions? As I said—'to improve our character by employing the proper means' is simply to *act* in the particular manner fitted to produce that result—and so of deteriorating our character. What, then, does Mr. Mill's 'we can improve our character *if we will*' really, after all, amount to? Simply, to this tritest and most trivial of truisms—that if we effectively *will* a particular action, we can perform it. Thus, if I have the little misfortune to be a drunkard, there is chance I might 'improve my character' by staying away from the public-house. Who questions that if I *will* to stay away from the public-house, I can stay away; or, unless he were a deep philosopher, would think of calling such a thing by so big a name as 'a Vital truth in moral Psychology'? Admitting it a vital and important truth, is it any whit more vital and important than its fellow, that, if I will to *go* to the public-house, I can go to it? Was ever such a mountain of philosophic intelligence, as Mr. Mill is on all hands admitted, delivered of a mouse so ridiculous? Was ever so ridiculous a mouse, when its parent came to give it a *name*, thus monstered into something like an elephant? Mr. Mill here reminds me of nothing so much as a child blowing its bubble in the

sun, and entranced with its own performance. Lo you! the little orb ascends, glowing with prismatic radiance; do but prick it with the merest needle-point, and it descends in a drop of dirty water. 'We can improve our character *if we will*,' if we will, we can deteriorate our character; according as we may chance to will either way, we can go to the public-house or *not* go. So in the concrete interpreted, in this there is plainly nothing but 'the liberty, as to which,' as Hume says, 'there can be no 'subject of dispute; if we *choose* to remain at rest, we 'may; if we *choose* to move, we also may'—what Hamilton calls 'the liberty of Spontaneity (to *Do* as we will), *a liberty which no Fatalist ever disallowed.*' *This*, which no Fatalist ever disallowed, or needs disallow, which nobody, in fact, would dream of disallowing, were he thrice over Fatalist, is what discriminates Mr. Mill's 'true doctrine of Causation' from the doctrine (obnoxious) of Fate!![1]

[1] In the above I have simply expanded the criticism on Mr. Mill at this point, indicated by Dr. Travis in his interesting work, *Moral Freedom reconciled with Causation—by the Analysis of the Process of Self-Determination.* By Henry Travis, M.D. London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1865.

'Mr. Mill's *Logic*—"If we examine closely we shall find that this '"feeling of being able to modify our *character if we wish*, is itself the '"feeling of moral freedom which we are conscious of. A person feels '"morally free who feels that his habits or his temptations are not his '"masters, but he theirs; who, even in yielding to them, knows that '"he could resist,"' etc. But to be able to modify our character, without having power to determine our volitions, is only to have power to

Mr. Mill gives a slight sketch of the extremely intelligible *modus*, in which his 'moral Causationist, 'desiring to improve his character, may do it by the 'use of proper means;' and he contrasts with him the 'modified Fatalist,' who 'will not use these means, for he will not believe in their efficacy.'[1] He then winds up—'I cannot suppose my critics capable 'of maintaining that such a difference as this between 'the two theories, is of no practical importance; and

perform the *acts* which are requisite to produce the result; and this is only what is called freedom to *act*, to which the Necessitarian doctrine, *even in its less qualified form, is not opposed!*—(Pp. 36, 37.)

Dr. Travis's book—as its title implies—professes to conciliate in Intelligence the 'opposite opinions' which, according to Hamilton, can only be conciliated in Belief. In my opinion, it quite fails to do so, almost as a matter of course. It is not the less an excellent and instructive work; and a reader must be very unusually well informed on the subject, who will not derive something from its close and careful preliminary *résumé* of the argument on both sides.

[1] 'Suppose that a person dislikes some part of his own character, 'and would be glad to change it. He cannot, as he well knows, 'change it by a mere act of volition. He must use the means which 'nature gives to ourselves, as she gives to our parents and teachers, of 'influencing our characters by appropriate circumstances. If he is a 'Modified Fatalist, *he will not use those means, for he will not believe in 'their efficacy;* but will remain passively discontented with himself, 'or, what is worse, will learn to be contented, thinking that his charac-'ter has been made for him, and that he cannot make it over again, '*however willing*. If, on the contrary, he is a Moral Causationist, he 'will know that the work is not finally and irrevocably done; that the 'improvement of his character is still possible by the proper means, the 'only condition being that he should desire what by the supposition, he 'does desire; consequently, if the desire is stronger than the means are 'disagreeable, he will set about doing that, which, if done, will improve 'his character.'—(Pp. 586-7.)

'I must with all courtesy decline to recognise as 'entitled to any voice in the question, whoever is not 'able to seize a distinction so broad and obvious.'

A Fatalist, as Mr. Mill here defines him, is a person who 'disbelieves in the efficacy of means'—who, being a drunkard, says—'a drunkard I am fated to 'remain;[1] it is no matter, therefore, whether I stay 'away from the customary public-house, or go to it. 'Of course I can *at will* do either; but it really does 'not matter which I do; the result, as fated, must be 'the same!' This gentleman, supposed, is a Fatalist, and a fool to boot; what, in effect, he is capable of saying is, that he must remain a drunkard, whether or no he gives up his habit of drinking. A cessation from drink is the *mean* by which he may cease to be a drunkard; and of this mean he 'does not believe in the efficacy.' Mr. Mill may call him a 'Modified Fatalist' if he will; I should prefer to call him, for my own part, a quite unmodified idiot. A man of this sort—his house being on fire about his ears—would say—'If I am fated to be burnt, I shall

[1] Why suppose any one capable of this? If a man *is* a Fatalist and a drunkard, he must very well know that other people have been drunkards like himself, who yet afterwards became models of sobriety. *Their* character, at first determined *for* them to drunkenness, was afterwards determined *for* them to sobriety. In these cases—with no harm to Fatalistic Theory—'the work was not finally and irrevocably done.' Why must a man cease to be a Fatalist, and become what Mr. Mill calls a Moral Causationist, in order to believe that possibly in *his* case also, 'the work is not finally and irrevocably done'?

'be burnt—I need not, therefore, take the trouble to 'walk out.' Except that, indeed, his procedure would indicate a certain 'belief in the efficacy of means,' he might as well at once plunge headlong into the flames; for, even if we suppose him to escape them, it is plain he could not long survive. Such a man would presently decline food, on the ground that, if he was fated to be starved to death, he *would* be so; and starved he would accordingly be. Fatalists of this particular type, are, I should imagine, *rare;* Mr. Mill seems to indicate that he has known several specimens; I can only regret, for my own part, that I have not been equally fortunate.

There is, however, *another* type of Fatalist, with which I am more familiar; and it is a type, by Mr. Mill himself glanced at in his closing paragraph already alluded to—'Before leaving the subject, it is 'worth while to remark, that not only the doctrine of 'Necessity' (as distinguished from the 'true doctrine of Causation,' belike), 'but Predestination in its 'coarsest form, if combined with a belief that God 'works according to general laws, which have to be 'learnt from experience, *has no tendency to make us 'act in any respect otherwise than we should do, if we 'thought our actions really contingent,*' etc. etc.

This kind of Fatalist 'believes in the efficacy of means'—employs them just as if he believed in Free-will; and believes, in so employing them, that *this*

also is Fate; that the end being fated, the employment of the means also is. And between a Fatalist of *this* kind, and Mr. Mill, as Moral Causationist, *consistently developing his doctrine*, I confess I am 'able to seize no distinction.' Between Mr. Mill's doctrine and that of the *other* fatalist, adduced by Mr. Mill for his argumentative purpose of contrast, I *do* seize a distinction—that, namely, between a doctrine, as it exists in the mind of a narrow blockhead who sees only one corner of a subject, and *mis*-sees even that, and as it lives in the mind of a man of wide and piercing intelligence like Mr. Mill, who sees, at least, *a good deal more of it.* And than *this*—the distinction between a doctrine, as held by a sage and an idiot, few distinctions are more 'broad and obvious,' or of greater 'practical importance.' If this distinction—important and obvious, yet not, I admit, 'fundamental'—be not 'broad' enough for Mr. Mill, I must e'en submit, as I may, to be told that, 'with 'all courtesy, he declines to recognise me as entitled 'to any voice in the question.' What need I say in reply, except—with an emulous refinement of courtesy—that whether or no, I care not, as declining to recognise in Mr. Mill on *this* subject, even a semblance of authority?

As regards Mr. Mill's remark on what he calls 'Mr. Alexander's curious dictum, that a motive is 'itself an *act*,' what is to be said, except that, how-

ever Mr. Mill might be pleased to consider it *curious*, it ought not at least to have been *novel* to him? A motive being defined in Mr. Mill's unexceptionable terms as 'a desire or aversion,' the thing is as old as Epictetus, whom Mr. Mill must surely have read—'*In nostra potestate* est opinio, *appetitio, desiderium*, '*aversatio*, et, ut uno complectar verbo, quælibet 'nostræ *actiones*.' It is also to be found in *another* writer, whom Mr. Mill must be supposed to have read —though at odd times, as we have seen, there might almost seem reason to doubt of this—to wit, Sir W. Hamilton. 'We are unable to conceive an act of 'will as not an effect,—*i.e.*, as undetermined by a 'motive; and *if we identify, as we may, the motive with* '*an anterior act of will*, we fall at once,' etc. Whether a *motive* (defined as a *desire*) be with utmost accuracy to be called an *act*, who will may decide. I should rather suppose *not:* but that the mass of our desires complicate themselves with act, as in definite relation to the will, whereby, *to a certain extent*, they may be stimulated or controlled at pleasure, will not, I suppose, be denied by any one; and this was all that was needed to constitute my argument aimed at. Mr. Mill is thus not very far from the mark, in saying that my 'curious dictum' 'can only have a true mean-'ing, or any meaning at all, if understood of this 'indirect influence of our voluntary acts over our 'mental dispositions.' But does Mr. Mill really sup-

pose, that any *rational* Fatalist would think himself interested to deny such an influence? that by including in his own 'doctrine of Causation' this 'indirect 'influence of our voluntary acts over our mental dis-'positions,' he discriminates it from a doctrine of Fate? If so, he is a prey to the merest hallucination. A Fatalist, an intelligent Fatalist—I do not concern myself with the idiot, whom, under the title of Fatalist, Mr. Mill erects into a philosopher—would admit, in the frankest way, what no rational creature denies—'the influence of voluntary acts over the dispositions;' but he would refer them to the *previous* dispositions, and maintain that dispositions and acts alike were involved in the circle of *Fate.* And, unless by once again airing his idiot upon us, as the only authentic Fatalist, Mr. Mill, so far as I can see, would have no reply to offer.

IX.

I HAVE now considered at every point important enough to call for special remark, the 'Notes' to Mr. Mill's Chapter, in which he is good enough, by name, to recognise me. In addition to these, I observe, incorporated with his text, a paragraph of some length and elaboration, which is pretty plainly intended—though expressly I am not mentioned—to rebut certain strictures I had ventured to make on one of Mr. Mill's arguments. Mr. Mill (page 509, 1st ed.) being minded to maintain, that even on the extremest hypothesis of *Fate*, 'moral distinctions' would still continue to exist, not only as *recognised* (which is *one* thing) but as *real* (which is quite *another*, though Mr. Mill seems throughout unaware of this) illustrated his position by supposing two distinct *breeds* of human creatures, destitute alike of Free-will, and irresistibly determined, respectively, by the very constitution of their nature, to the extremes of good and of evil. The distinctions between the actions of these two classes of creatures, according to Mr. Mill, would not the less be *moral* distinctions. This I peremptorily denied; asserting that in such a case, the distinctions would

be mere distinctions of *utility*, simply *as such*; distinctions of good and evil indeed, in the sense of *benefit* and *injury*, yet not without plain absurdity, to be consecrated as distinctions of *moral* good and evil. In the passage which he now interpolates, a certain ground of justice in my criticism, Mr. Mill seems candidly disposed to admit (p. 574, 3d ed.)

'An opponent may say,' he writes, 'that this is not 'a distinction between *moral* good and evil; and *I am* '*far from intending to beg the question against him.* 'But neither can he be permitted to beg the question '*by assuming that the distinction is not moral because it* '*does not imply Free-will.*' Now *this*, most distinctly I did *not* do; and to represent me as so doing (though I am not by name mentioned, there cannot, I suppose, be a doubt, that Mr. Mill here refers to my remarks) is simply plain mis-statement. Without hint of a reference to Free-will in the matter, it seemed sufficient for my purpose to observe, that Mr. Mill's well-disposed *breed*, instead of being 'honoured as demigods,' according to Mr. Mill's notion, would more probably be despised as idiots—amiable idiots indeed, or *innocents*, but not likely, as such, to become objects of devoted Hero-worship; that, on the other hand, his *evil*-disposed *breed* was by his own very definition of it, identified with the class of homicidal maniacs; and that unless maniacs were to be held moral agents, these creatures precisely identical could not be so

held. And the sum of the matter was, that Mr. Mill was not a little absurd in seeking to illustrate moral distinctions by the actions of creatures, thus shown to have no moral agency. Unless indeed Mr. Mill might chance to hold (as perhaps in point of fact he does) that in order to moral action or agency, no moral agents are needed. At what precise point of my argument here, I 'assume that the distinction is not moral because it does not imply Free-will,' Mr. Mill, if I do not greatly mistake, would find himself much puzzled to indicate.[1]

It is not a little amusing, that Mr. Mill, having formally announced that he 'is far from intending to beg this question' against me, with an admirable philosophical composure, proceeds the very next instant, to *beg it*, over a whole page and a half :—

'The reality of moral distinctions, and the freedom 'of our volitions, are questions independent of one 'another. My position is, that a human being who 'loves, disinterestedly and consistently, his fellow-

[1] Had I anywhere in my argument implied that the moral distinction between a sane man and a maniac is, that the one has Free-will, the other not, Mr. Mill might have had some colour for his statement. But I did not anywhere do this. Assuming, what every one admits, that a maniac—on whatever ground—is *not a moral agent*, I identified with maniacs Mr. Mill's evil *breed* of human creatures, on no more abstruse consideration than this, that by the very definition of them, as Mr. Mill himself allowed, or indeed asserted, they could only be 'regarded as noxious beasts' and treated accordingly. The question of Free-will at this point I left completely in abeyance; to have done otherwise would have been to be guilty as by Mr. Mill libelled.

'creatures, and whatever tends to their good, who
'hates with a vigorous hatred what causes them evil,
'and whose actions correspond in character with those
'feelings, is naturally, necessarily, and reasonably, an
'object to be loved, admired, sympathized with, and
'in all ways cherished and encouraged by mankind;
'while a person who has none of these qualities, or so
'little that his actions continually jar with the good
'of others, and that for purposes of his own he is
'ready to inflict on them a great amount of evil, is a
'natural and legitimate object of their fixed aversion,
'and of conduct conformable thereto; and this whether
'the will be free or not, and even independently of any
'theory of the difference between right and wrong;
'whether right means productive of happiness, and
'wrong productive of misery, or right and wrong are
'intrinsic qualities of the actions themselves, provided
'only we recognise that there is a difference, and that
'the difference is highly important. What I maintain
'is, that this is a sufficient distinction between moral
'good and evil; sufficient for the ends of society and
'sufficient for the individual conscience—that we need
'no other distinction; that, if there be any other dis-
'tinction we can dispense with it; and that supposing
'acts in themselves good or evil to be as uncondition-
'ally determined from the beginning of things as if
'they were phenomena of dead matter, still if the
'determination from the beginning of things has been

'that they shall take place through my love of good 'and hatred of evil, I am a proper object of esteem 'and affection; and if that they shall take place 'through my love of self and indifference to good, I 'am a fit object of aversion, which may rise to abhor- 'rence. And no competently informed person will 'deny that, as a matter of fact, those who have held 'this creed have had as strong a feeling, both emo- 'tional and practical, of moral distinctions, as any 'other people.'

In all this, I find nothing but steady dogmatic assertion, commended to the reader by Mr. Mill's consummate mastery of clear and ingenious statement, the art of which in this case consists in heaping up about the subject a profusion of emotional terms,—'esteem, affection, aversion, admiration, abhorrence,' etc. etc. etc., beset with inevitable *moral* associations, Mr. Mill's title to profit by which is the very matter in dispute. In *this* mode of begging a question, Mr. Mill seldom indeed fails to exhibit himself an adept. To Mr. Mill's dogmatic assertion here, a steady dogmatic counter-assertion, with a request that he will be good enough to *prove* that the aversion and abhorrence he speaks of would be *moral* aversion and abhorrence, seems the fit and sufficient answer; and if anything further were needed, the easy method of reply which sufficed for his first crude statement may very well suffice for this later one, which only differs

from the first as somewhat more plausibly padded out. Let us suppose a man whose 'acts are unconditionally determined' to a particular extreme of evil, 'as if they were phenomena of dead matter,' and who rushes into homicide, let us say, by a chronic impulse of rage as irresistible as the law by which a stone unattached inevitably falls to the ground. It would be interesting to know how Mr. Mill would discriminate such a man from a homicidal maniac.[1] He cannot allege his use of reason; for, *ex hypothesi*, he has no such use of it as could avail him for avoidance of

[1] Perhaps Mr. Mill had better not attempt to do so, as it does not seem likely he would succeed. *Vide* passage in his *Logic* before commented on (p. 83) :—'Human actions are never (*except in some cases of mania*) ruled by any one motive with such absolute sway that there is no room for the influence of any other. The causes, therefore, on which action depends are never uncontrollable.' I have already remarked that this statement is really a Free-will one, as in manifest outrage of the doctrine of unconditional Causation. What seems *here* to be remarked is, that *maniacal* action is by Mr. Mill expressly defined as 'ruled by one motive with such absolute sway, that there is no room for the influence of any other,' and *as* so ruled, 'uncontrollable.' Sane action again, is action the causes of which are controllable; action *not* so ruled by a motive but that 'there is room for the influence of other motives.' But *this*, from Mill's point of view, I take leave to consider nonsense. How possibly, within the sphere of Causation, could there be *room* for any motives *other* than those causally efficient (in which of course we include those present, though—in a loose sense—*non*-efficient), by which the action was determined, and determined—except as we intrude these *other* motives—*uncontrollably*. If, as Mr. Mill implies, this character of uncontrollableness, as being 'ruled by a motive leaving *room* for the influence of no other' be the sign of *insane* action, it seems plain, that for any consistent Causationist, *sane* action is in no respect to be distinguished from it, as equally partaking of this character.

the crime; neither can he say, that whilst the maniac is not so, the man is 'amenable to motive;' for again, inasmuch as the motive could not *possibly* deter, the man was not really 'amenable' to it. Pending Mr. Mill's demonstration of difference between them, I venture to assume the homicidal man, irresistibly determined to murder as stones are to fall to the earth, as in every moral regard identical with the homicidal maniac. And what is true of this extreme case must of course equally be true in cases less extreme, for, as Mr. Mill has well told us, 'there cannot be one 'theory for one kind of voluntary actions, and another 'theory for another kind.' Consequently, for no bad action whatever, 'unconditionally determined as if it were a phenomenon of dead matter,' is a man more morally responsible than if he were urged to it by *maniacal* impulse. That this view, in which for our evil actions we are no more *blamable* than maniacs, is 'sufficient for the ends of society,' may in some sense be admitted; for the man, though not *morally* responsible, Society, for its own ends, may *make*, if it will, *responsible*, and hang him out of hand, or, failing that, shut him up. *How*, as Mr. Mill alleges, it is also 'sufficient for the individual conscience,' self-approving or self-condemning, I meantime fail to discern. As to the other kind of man, *all* whose actions are supposed 'from the beginning of things unconditionally determined to *good*, like phenomena of dead matter,

he might as well be a dead man at once, philanthropically set at work by a stimulus from galvanic batteries cunningly brought to bear upon him,[1] for any moral quality, *rationally* to his actions attributable. In speaking of 'encouragement' to such a man, surely Mr, Mill speaks idly ; in regard of such a man, utterly incapable of lapse, encouragement and temptation alike are seen to have no meaning. There could be no sense in encouraging him, except, perhaps, *pour encourager les autres* less happily and abnormally constituted. That he might be an object of *esteem*, I admit ; but the esteem would, I apprehend, be of a negative, and not very vividly *moral* kind, like that which we accord to sheep, on the ground that they

[1] Let me utilize this suggestion a little. Suppose the resources of Science capable of such a thing—a corpse being furnished to us, by cunning applications of galvanism, we can so stimulate it that life is exactly simulated, and it goes about performing good and bad actions at the will of the scientific gentleman who works it from behind the scenes. Mr. Mill would, I suppose, admit, that not the poor corpse-puppet, but the scientific operator, was to be blamed if it committed murder, to be praised if it carried a good Irish Bill through Parliament. And suppose that Science could go further, and bestowing life and consciousness, could now produce the very same actions, not directly, but through a medium of emotion generated—'love of good, or love of self and indifference to good,' does Mr. Mill really suppose the state of the case thus altered? Plainly it is not the least so ; the scientific operator is still the *real agent*—the *apparent* agent merely his puppet, in regard of whom moral judgments can have clearly no manner of relevancy. And between such a galvanized puppet, and Mr. Mill's supposed man, whose acts are 'unconditionally determined from the 'beginning of things as if they were phenomena of dead matter,' no moral distinction can ever possibly be substantiated. *Vide* as to this, concluding Note on Hume.

are good enough not to turn tigers upon us. To illustrate this matter in an easy way, let me suppose the advent of some wonderful billiard-player, who invariably, on taking up his cue, proceeded to make his game off the balls; under whose charming hand the balls, as if bewitched, perpetually either cannoned, or softly subsided in the pocket; who, let him try what hopeless stroke he would, was *never known to fail to score!* Certainly, he would flutter a little at first, the Volsces of the sporting circles; his skill would be reckoned a marvel. But suppose it came presently to be known that all this took place by a mysterious law of nature as constant as that of gravitation; that, let him play as wildly, aimlessly, recklessly as he would, the man was, under this strange law, absolutely *necessitated* to score. The man would still be recognised as a marvellous billiard-playing product of nature; but should we ever more hear tell of his *skill?* Pretty plainly, *not;* some lurking possibility of *failure* is essential to the very notion. One would not peril a serious argument on an analogy so off-hand as this; but it seems to me that in the *moral* sphere, the case is not essentially otherwise. *There*, also, some distinct possibility of *failure* is the necessary condition of any *merit*, to be rationally attributed to *success*. Easy indeed to throw *sixes* any number of times in succession, if you are allowed first to load your dice. A man such as Mr. Mill here supposes,

unconditionally determined in every case to good, as inevitably as a stone is to the ground, would be, so to speak, playing with dice which he had previously got loaded to suit him. No thanks to him for throwing his virtuous sixes any number of times successively. Not the less, should his sixes be from time to time thrown to me, in the form of £60 cheques, I should make it a point to regard him with some degree of 'esteem and affection.' Primarily, my esteem and affection would be directed rather to the cheques than the man, and only to the man as 'associated' with them; but *in time*—there is no saying—an '*inseparable* association' might be established; and the affection which I had rationally entertained for his cheques, I might afterwards transfer to the man. I should no whit the *less*, in doing so, be a *merely hallucinated blockhead;* the man would no whit the *more*, in throwing his inevitable sixes, be proved to be *morally meritorious.* In having gradually come to so consider him, under the 'law of inseparable association,' I should simply have been befooled by that law; a misfortune from which so sagacious a person as Mr. Mill has not always contrived to escape.[1]

[1] I do not myself see that, from the point of view indicated, these arguments can well be answered. By changing the point of view, it might be quite possible to develop the paradox from them, that the more virtuous a man is, the *less* virtuous, in the sense of having *merit* attributed to him, the more vicious the *less* vicious, in the sense of being

As to Mr. Mill's concluding sentence, I should suppose that what he says in it may be quite true; were it not indeed, that, as believing he can *help* his actions, he is not the unconditional Causationist he thinks he is, Mr. Mill himself, in virtue of the noble ethical fervour, which glows in very much of his writing, might very well serve as an instance to illustrate his own position here. But what if it be to the full, as Mr. Mill says? It is worthless for any purpose of his argument. Suppose that up to the age of five-and-twenty, a man, without much troubling his head about them, has, in Butler's phrase, 'kept to his natural sense of things;' has never expressly cared to think of questions of Liberty or Necessity; and as to his moral convictions, has accepted them simply as they came to him, possibly with much earnestness. Somehow, he is led to think of this vexed matter, and—no shame to him on the ground of logic—is convinced by the crushing force of the Necessitarian argument. He accepts the doctrine of Necessity, and scouts the idea of Freedom; yet continues, just as before he did, to believe in Moral Responsibility, or the reality of moral distinctions. This may very well be on several grounds. For it is just possible he may as little as Mr. Mill, understand the doctrine he

subject of *blame*. This would not however any whit invalidate the demonstration that on the Necessitarian hypothesis, merit, demerit, praise, blame, *desert*, etc., are words with no rational significance.

professes, and, scouting the idea of Freedom, may all the while firmly believe in it; or not *believing* in it, he may yet have a *feeling* or *instinct* of Freedom—a feeling that he can *help* doing as he does—which clings to him, and is unawares regulative of his feelings otherwise; or finally, his moral convictions being no less precious to him on the one hand, than his 'speculative dogma' on the other, in his determination to keep to *both*, he may have thought out the relations between them in a quite loose and irresolute way, and as trimmer between Freedom and Fate, have invented for himself some such *via media* of utterly illogical compromise as we have seen Mr. Mill take up with in his 'Doctrine of Moral Causation.'

And, further, if we suppose that, as a bolder logician, he has resolutely pressed the line of argument which leads him to admit such antagonism between the doctrine of Necessity and the moral nature of man, that holding, as he does to the first, he must logically reject the other; *what* is proved by the fact that his 'practical feeling' in the matter of moral distinctions remains precisely as it was? That the reasonings were *false*, by which, *speculatively*, he was led to reject them? Surely, nay. All that seems really proved is, that a 'speculative dogma' accepted, has failed—as indeed we should expect—to extirpate a 'practical feeling,' founded on education, original instinct, or what you will, and worked into the very

fibre of the mind by the associations of a whole quarter of a century. Does Mr. Mill, of all men, need to be reminded, that such rooted habits of feeling could only yield, *if at all*, with the utmost slowness, and 'as counter-associations might be formed'?[1] Of what importance then is it to allege the persistence of the practical feeling as opposed to the speculative conclusion? *Here*, once more, in effect, Mr. Mill, emulous of Dr. Johnson, despised as 'a man of much over-rated ability,'[2] is seen vigorously kicking a stone with his foot, and considering he triumphs over Berkeley. At this rate, people will begin to suspect that Dr. Johnson is by no means the *only* man of eminence whose abilities have been a little over-rated by the more ardent class of his admirers.

A few words as to only one other little point, and I dismiss this portion of the subject. In the little Essay which Mr. Mill notices, I could not but comment with some sharpness on Mr. Mill's unfortunate passage, which I must beg to be excused in once more quoting: 'Yes; if he really "*could not help*" 'acting as he did; that is, if it did not depend on his '*will*, if he was under physical constraint, or even if 'he was under the action of such a violent motive 'that no fear of punishment could have any effect;

[1] Is it necessary to note here that no counter-associations *could* in such case be formed, by comparison, of any potency?

[2] Somewhere in Mr. Mill's *Logic*. I have not cared to overhaul the passage, the book not being at hand.

'which, if capable of being ascertained, is a just 'ground of exemption.' This passage is so plainly to Mr. Mill, as Causationist, unpermitted, that it would have been wisdom for him, on finding it objected to on grounds not to be gainsaid, simply to have dropped it from his book. It might then by a kindly critic have been condoned, as merely one of the little inadvertencies which the shrewdest thinker may at times lapse into in sounding his difficult way through intricacies of abstruse subject. As Mr. Mill, however, has not only reproduced the passage, but by making a slight alteration, has certified to us that his deliberate attention has been given to it, he has formally erected a cross, on which he now hangs a crucified impenitent, and from which the good offices of all the kind critics in the world will scarce avail to take him down. Originally, the passage stood thus: 'If he really "could not help" acting as he did; that 'is, if his *Will* could not have helped it.' This he now changes into 'that is—if it did not *depend on his will*;' and this is, I suppose, one of the passages alluded to in his Preface, in which 'a slight modification in a 'sentence, or even in a phrase, which a person ac-'quainted with the former editions might read with-'out observing it, and of which, even if he observed 'it, he would most likely not perceive the purpose, 'has sometimes effaced many pages of hostile criti-'cism.' By changing the turn of his phrase here,

Mr. Mill *does* succeed in evading the point of a page or two of light banter, to which I presumed to treat him, not perhaps in its flippancy of tone altogether to be held becoming, any more than certain occasional levities of the like kind which disfigure the present performance. Does he thus evade the point of the criticism—led up to by these little objectionable gaieties—that by *will* here he must needs mean nothing but that *Free*-will, 'in virtue of which only 'could a man in any case "have *helped*" his act, as Mr. Mill here plainly implies that in most cases he could?' Plainly, he does not in the least evade it, his passage remaining as before, an implicit assertion of Freedom, expressly in his doctrine denied. Further—'if it did 'not depend on his will; if he was under the action 'of such a violent motive that no fear of punishment '*could* have any effect, which, if capable of being as-'certained, is a just ground of exemption.' That in *every* case in which the fear of punishment *has* no effect, it *could* have had none, is, from the point of view of the Causationist, so entirely 'capable of being ascertained,' that any Causationist maintaining it *could* have had, is self-constituted *no* Causationist, but simply, as to this matter, one of the bewildered of the earth, who does not the least know what he is. If the fear of punishment *had* no effect, it is plain it only *could* have had effect by being a *stronger* fear; and to suppose it so, is to suppose 'that change in

'the antecedents, which Mr. Mill himself has taught 'us to exclude.' Consequently, in *every* case in which a deterring motive *has* no effect; that is, in every case of crime supposable, there is 'just ground of exemption.' From *this*—in my former criticism pressed upon Mr. Mill, as logically involved in his deliverance here—is there anything in his new turn of phrase devised to 'efface hostile criticism,' in the least to facilitate his escape? I cannot, for my own part, see it so.

Furthermore—'if it did not depend on his *will;* 'if he was under the influence of such a violent mo-'tive, that no fear of punishment would have any 'effect;' that no counter-motive could avail against it! In *this*, Mr. Mill may be held to have reached at last his *ne plus ultra* of absurdity. It amounts to a distinct announcement, that *no* action in which a strong motive overpowers a weaker one, 'depends on the *will*,' or is voluntary; that no actions are, in point of fact, voluntary, except, perhaps, those which are *in*voluntary. Hideously disastrous for Mr. Mill as his—'If his *will* could not have helped it,' was shown to be, it did not, on the face of it, involve him in anything so absolutely *dreadful* as this. Better for him to have frankly accepted and admitted my 'hostile criticism,' than thus have sought to 'efface' it by a 'modification of phrase,' by which, from one depth of absurdity he is plunged into yet a deeper one.

SUPPLEMENTARY.

WHATEVER be the force of the argument, merely logical, which, as proving the Causation of actions, is held to invalidate human Freedom—and it seems to me so altogether *crushing* that I am surprised any creature with 'discourse of reason' at all should seek for an instant to evade it—it seems not the less likely that whilst the world lasts, and humanity remains as it is, said human Freedom will always have a good deal to say for itself. Some thousand years or so hence, when the John Stuart Mill of the period has triumphantly demonstrated it 'a figment,' and declined to admit it in consciousness, his critics will probably be able to prove to him from some passage inadvertently indicative of his true feeling in the matter, that—figment as he has cleverly shown it to be—he himself retains a thorough belief in it. That doing *so*, he could yet have *helped* doing so, or done otherwise, is, as we have seen, Mr. Mill's assured conviction; and it is a conviction, I believe, which he will be found to share with every sane man, who, dismissing for the moment his theories, will candidly

tell us how he truly feels in the matter. If there be any man who feels otherwise, and is practically and clearly convinced he can in nothing *help* doing as he does, be it for good, or evil, I should at least not advise him to allege his inability as an excuse before his fellow-men, of whatever may be amiss in his conduct; for it is certain it will not be listened to, or admitted, except for a maniac. But in point of fact, no man ever dreams of alleging in excuse of his voluntary actions the plea of inability to *help* them, which is admitted when the will is in abeyance to a clearly made out compulsion. And if a belief or conviction of which we are thus unable to get rid, even when we have reasoned it away, be not, on the *expellas furca recurret* principle, to be accepted, as a genuine belief *naturæ*,[1] or datum of human consciousness, I know not where we should look for such.

There seemed always considerable force in Clarke's way of putting it, that 'all our actions do now in 'experience *seem* to us to be *free*, exactly in the same 'manner, as they *would do*, upon supposition of our 'being really Free Agents'—that in fact—freedom

[1] Our belief in the external world, it may be urged, is precisely in the same sense, a Natural belief; we cannot get rid of it, even when we have reasoned it away. Yet Mr. Mill not only regards it as illusory, but is ready with his 'Psychological Theory,' which constructs the Illusion as such, out of primary elements of experience. And if out of elements of experience he can similarly educe the idea of Freedom, it is admitted he will do something to discredit it as an article of Natural Belief. Of this hereafter (see pp. 124-128).

assumed—the evidence of consciousness in its favour, could by no possibility have been stronger than it now is, in the very minds—as instance that of Mr. Mill—by which it is most strenuously denied. He very well goes on to say that 'this does not indeed 'amount to a strict Demonstration of our being 'free;' and if he had said it did not amount to any demonstration at all, strict, or unstrict, perhaps his own strictness would have been greater. What follows is in some sense remarkable enough—seeing how perseveringly the plea put forth in it, as fundamental to his whole Philosophy, was afterwards urged by Hamilton—to deserve quotation in an argument originating in Mr. Mill's consideration of his claims. It is not, he admits, a Demonstration; 'yet it leaves 'on the other side of the question, nothing but a bare 'Possibility of our *being so framed by the author of* '*Nature, as to be unavoidably deceived in this matter* '*by every Experience of every action we perform.*' There is nothing however here, to which a determined and thorough-going antagonist needs find any difficulty in replying. The bare possibility by Clarke admitted, is strictly all that is needed by the sceptic, as ground of his negative reasonings; and to what Mr. Mill calls Hamilton's 'tiresome plea' here anticipated by Clarke—'is then the root of our Nature a lie? the Deity therein a deceiver?'—he may answer, with entire composure, that perhaps it is

really *so;* that he sees no very good reason, *why not,* and will be glad if from his own clear personal knowledge of the Deity, his opponent will be good enough to furnish him with one. To a gentleman prepared, as he ought to be, from his point of view of the sceptic, to quite coolly go this length, it will not be easy to reply.[1] He is perfectly willing to admit Freedom as given in consciousness; but denies that its being so given is any guarantee of its reality. And if nowhere else he asserts such a guarantee; and not in the least staggered at being told that Science itself is thus reduced to incertitude, announces that for aught we can ever know, the whole world and life of man, is simply a 'shadow-system' of cunningly devised illusions, his position seems pretty impregnable.

Mr. Mill, however, does not go quite this length, admitting throughout in consciousness, supposed genuine, a basis of reality and certitude. And it is alleged that for the fact of Freedom,—admitted on the ground of logic inexplicable—we *have* this indefeasible guarantee of *consciousness.* This Mr. Mill, it is plain, in the most resolute manner would deny, even whilst admitting—as in fact, when the thing is pressed upon him (as at p. 36), he cannot possibly

[1] In order to get at the Deity by way of proof or otherwise, the veracity of Consciousness and Reason must be assumed. How then can we legitimately make use of the Deity to prove the veracity of Consciousness? *Vide* Mr. Mill (pp. 161-3).

help doing—that of Freedom, he has, like Hodge and others, a practical feeling or conviction. I am 'convinced'—he would say—or 'aware—I will not say *conscious*' (see *ante*, p. 34), having, it seems, a faculty peculiar to himself, of being most sharply convinced, and aware of things, yet all the while profoundly unconscious of them. In effect, he would be sure to say that, admitting Freedom—as he *must* and *does*—in what I may call *developed* consciousness, that 'familiar and intimate knowledge[1] concerning our-' selves which there is no appropriate scientific name 'for,' (p. 566, 3d ed.) he denies it in the *primitive* consciousness, to which only he attributes scientific validity. But, this position assumed, Mr. Mill is bound to exhibit the process, whereby, no germ of it being given in *primitive* consciousness, the feeling of Freedom becomes 'developed,' as we afterwards find it in the *mature* consciousness which, in order to meet Mr. Mill, I am willing to call 'conviction.' And, in any attempt to exhibit this process, Mr. Mill's failure would almost certainly be signal. Mr. Mill's grand test of a *datum* of primitive consciousness—for him an extremely convenient one—is, that it should be shown to be present in the mind of an infant at the

[1] If we are to be very strict with Mr. Mill, it may be noted that in using the word *knowledge* here he really gives up his case; knowledge—in so far as it really is so—involving the reality of the thing known; whilst from *belief*, on the other hand, there is no inference whatever of the reality of the thing believed.

instant of birth. No more than of anything else, can this be demonstrated of Freedom.[1] And in fact, I have elsewhere noted it of children, as 'not a little 'curious that the earliest utterances of these small 'philosophers are in favour of Mr. Mill's doctrine of 'Necessity.' In the fact familiar to every one in the

[1] And supposing it *could* be demonstrated—a miraculous babe being got whose consciousness, at the instant of birth, was found, on its being catechised, to include Freedom, or anything else obnoxious to Mr. Mill's theories? We should just be where we were. Mr. Mill is too clever a general, in taking up a position, not to carefully secure his line of retreat. Does any one doubt that in such a case as that supposed, Mr. Mill would for an instant hesitate to *remand us to the mother's womb*, and to some supposed round of *ante-natal* experiences, which, with a little help from Association and so on, would perfectly well serve his turn? Of course we could not follow Mr. Mill *there*. Psychology, as conceived by Mr. Mill, is certainly a pursuit of Knowledge under difficulties. This seems but idle fleering, and yet is not wholly so. The child before birth would be quite as legitimate an ally in argument for Mr. Mill, as the child at the instant of it; and not any whit more ludicrous. In all this of Mr. Mill about the consciousness of an infant at the instant of birth, if we could get at it, being decisive, as *pure*, in distinction from subsequent consciousness which includes elements of experience, there seems nothing but misconception. Mr. Mill, as we shall see (p. 156), does not seem to be aware of a fact so simple as this, that Consciousness and Experience are, in point of fact, convertible terms, Experience being only possible through Consciousness, and the first fact of Consciousness being also the first of Experience. He seems also at times to forget, what of course he must very well know, that in order to Experience there must first be a creature to *have* it, by whose outfit of connate *capacities*, as in ordered sequence developed, the character and content of the Experience are rigorously throughout determined. Not unfrequently, as the vowed Apostle of Experience, the divine Original of everything, Mr. Mill almost seems to write, as if given the Experience called Vision, he could deduce from it the seeing Eye. But surely to begin with the Eye and thence proceed to the Vision seems much the more natural order.

least familiar with children, that constantly—and this in obvious passionate *bona fides*—for acts which are plainly voluntary, they will allege in excuse the 'I could not help it,' which in later life nobody would dream of alleging unless wishing to be held a maniac, I have said that 'the force and obviousness of the 'argument, derived from the experienced sequences 'of impulse and act, receives perhaps the strongest 'illustration of which it seems capable.' The question before Mr. Mill is this—*how* comes it that the child, at this stage an orthodox Causationist Philosopher—rather more so than we have seen Mr. Mill himself—is afterwards debauched into the heresy of believing itself *free*, and able to *help* its actions? It does not seem much to attest the conclusiveness of Mr. Mill's 'Experience argument,'—the total facts being taken—that satisfying the infant in coats, it is despised and rejected by the boy who has intelligently progressed into knickerbockers. *Whence* this dissatisfaction of the boy with the wisdom of Mr. Mill, which perfectly sufficed him as an infant? Mr. Mill is desired to deduce it for us, and one is curious as to how he will proceed. If he succeeds in deducing it at all, it must be from some new fount of illumination, for it is certain it cannot come from the old one. The 'Experience' which suggested to the babe that—in its poor little trembling phrase—it 'could not help it,' can scarcely, by dint of being constantly repeated,

suggest to the boy that he *could*. Mr. Mill, who makes elsewhere so much use of the implement of 'Experience and inseparable Association,' is invited to employ it *here*. Doing so, he will inevitably be forced to admit, that Experience thus early suggesting Necessity,[1] as cumulative in what he calls the 'collective experience of life,' it must needs have so deepened this suggestion, 'as streams their channels deeper wear,' as utterly to preclude the emergence at an after period of a feeling of Freedom opposed to it. The feeling of Freedom, therefore, which Mr. Mill would fain deny, but cannot, is thus shown to emerge, *despite of* that law of 'Experience and inseparable Association' which Mr. Mill holds to be the most energetic constituent of belief. How, on these terms, it could ever succeed in emerging, except as what Mr. Mill denies it to be, *extra*-experiential and in the *true* sense—as distinct from his palpably absurd one—a *primitive* datum of consciousness, Mr. Mill is requested to explain. And the explanation, in order to be reasonably satisfactory to Mr. Mill himself, must be clear and cogent indeed, seeing it has the

[1] Though this sense of Necessity in the child, as expressed in its 'could not help it,' seems sufficiently curious to be noted, it is not of course in the least essential to the argument here. Apart from all question of the child, the question for Mr. Mill remains, *Whence* this feeling of Freedom, of a power in us to *help* our actions, 'the collective *experience* of life,' from its first to its last hour, giving, as Mr. Mill expressly asserts, evidence dead the other way?

whole weight of his own favourite law to contend against.

The only explanation I can conceive tendered is that developed at page 26 from Hume's hint, that 'the Will moves easily every way, and produces an 'image of itself (or a Velleity, as it is called in the 'schools) even on that side on which it did not settle.' But though not without a certain superficial plausibility, I scarcely think it approves itself on anything like a close examination. In the fact that the Will, in its moving hither and thither, in the process of deliberation, produces in its every movement 'an image of itself, or Velleity,' nothing is really explained, unless the necessity be also explained under which we are unavoidably led to *potentiate* the image, so to speak, and attribute to the so-called Velleity a vital reality as *will;* nor, unless this necessity—universal as we find its operation—be admitted a fundamental necessity of human reason, would it the least avail for Mr. Mill's purpose. Were it anything short of this, Mr. Mill's law of 'Experience and inseparable Association' would inevitably, with much ease, dispose of it. If Mr. Mill declines to admit this, he lies open to some suspicion of being willing, for the purpose of his argument, to make little *here* of the law, of which *elsewhere* he makes so much; degrading from its place of potency, as it suits him, an agency which it suited him before, and presently will suit him again, to re-

gard as well-nigh omnipotent. The mental law, therefore, by which unavoidably we attribute to the so-called Velleity the vital power of the *will*, is shown—as against Mr. Mill—to be a fundamental necessity or law of reason; and it is submitted that, as such, it is vain to seek to invalidate it by reason, in any of its subsequent operations, of what logical rigour soever; and that the fact is really *so*, will, I trust, appear as we proceed. The result of the whole is, that meantime—and pending such other explanation or *genesis* of the feeling as Mr. Mill may have to offer—he seems bound to admit in Freedom a genuine fact of human Consciousness, which amounts to his acceptance of it in *belief*. And this further result seems reached, that the only tenable attitude possible to any one denying Freedom, is that of the thorough-going sceptical gentleman before glanced at, who, denying the authority of consciousness, does not very confidently assert anything, but enthrones on the ruins of all Reality the spectre of universal Illusion. To this gentleman, it is admitted, no direct reply is to be offered.[1]

[1] Really none that I know of, except Hamilton's, neatly enough summed by Mr. Mill in saying that the Sceptic of this kind, 'in denying all knowledge denies none.' To which probably the Sceptic would reply that he denies none; that asserting nothing, he is not so inconsequent as to deny, denial being itself a mode of assertion. He simply doubts all. This, as Hamilton says, is to doubt that he doubts. Vide *Don Juan*:—

'So little do we know what we're about in
This world, I doubt, if doubt itself be doubting.'

By this doubt he is remanded to knowledge, whence he instantly proceeds to resolve himself into doubt again—and so on.

Restricting the view a little, it seems certain that whatever *else* on the denial of Freedom may lapse into the category of Illusion, moral distinctions *must*, and the Moral Responsibility of man. Not only on such a view, are they sceptically dissolved, as unable to show rational basis for themselves, but the argument against them is good to ground their dogmatic negation. Every attempt hitherto—as *vide* Hume's (Appendix), and now that of Mr. Mill—to harmonize with the scheme of unconditional Causation or Necessity, the *moral* nature of man, in virtue of which we hold him *culpable* in his evil actions (culpable as distinct from merely *punishable*), has resulted in helpless failure. But here, once more, if a man is quite thorough-going in his reasoning, and while denying neither Freedom, nor Morality, as facts of universal human Consciousness, develops the argument from Causation which seems to shatter the one, boldly presses it to its speculative result in the virtual extinction of the other, and declines to sacrifice these clear deductions of his Reason to what he can only regard as mere blind irrational beliefs, of which—except indeed as they are 'natural'—no account is to be given, I see not how he is to be answered, save only by answering his reasonings, which no one will ever be able to do. A Belief, were it thrice over 'Natural,' proves nothing beyond *itself* as a fact of Nature or life; it can never in the least avouch to us

the reality of the thing believed ; and surely beliefs—it may be urged—how sacred and important soever, are to be held somewhat in evil case, when, as here, we can only continue to cling to them in express defiance of Reason. Such beliefs, if 'natural,' as they are said to be, may always, on that ground, be trusted to maintain their practical efficiency ; but, not the less, are speculatively to be rejected as absurd. And it is really, after all, no answer to this scepticism, to allege that it carries in it a germ of the further scepticism which assails the very bases of human knowledge. This may or may not be—the Sceptic may reasonably answer—meantime, be good enough to deal with my argument on its own ground ; if any flaws exist in it, I suppose them capable of being exhibited ; failing to exhibit any such, you are bound to admit my conclusions. And thus far and provisionally, I must admit myself at one with the Sceptic.[1] But should it be found that all the while,

[1] Though hitherto representing the supposed Necessitarian as accepting the position of extreme scepticism, on which, in virtue of his denial as truth, of an admitted datum of consciousness, it is the aim of the dogmatist to thrust him, I do not in the least see that in strictness he is *bound* to accept it. There is consciousness—he might say—and consciousness ; I call in question no *data* of consciousness save such as I have shown to contradict the scientific Reason. My argument to that effect is before you ; if you cannot *answer*, in vain do you seek to *evade* it, by telling me I ought not, as denying consciousness, to be certain even of such a thing as that *two and two make four*. Produce, in your turn, the series of accurate reasonings by which *that* proposition is invalidated ; having done so, and found that I, in my turn, am unable

the Reason, in which—within the limits by reason itself prescribed—he surely does well to trust, is being exercised beyond these limits, and in a region in which its impotence is self-confessed, in that case it seems open to us to admit the whole force of his argument, and yet demur to his conclusion. And precisely thus it will be found.

The attempt to *explain* Freedom; to include it in the forms of the human understanding by effecting its logical reconcilement with the law of Universal Causation, is now, I should imagine, pretty well abandoned as hopeless. Again, to deny the *Universality* of the Law, by excluding from it human actions, in order to maintain their freedom, is somewhat too desperate an expedient, and amounts to intellectual suicide. A tenet which can only be defended by announcing a proposition so plainly absurd as this—that when a man eats, it is not because he is hungry or for any other reason known to him—had best at once be given up. The argument *in terrorem*—so to call it—from moral results of doctrine, is scarcely entitled to the name; and in any case can always be disposed of by coolly accepting the results, and requesting the opponent to disprove the reasonings by which they are reached. The evidence of Conscious-

to furnish you with an answer to them, you will *then*, I admit, be entitled, from my questioning of consciousness in *certain* of its *data*, to press me to question its authority in *all*. But *not*, as I think, *till then*.

ness is precarious—it may be said—and ought not to be received, when it can be shown to contradict any clear deduction of reason. With the retort upon the sceptic that *here* rejecting the evidence of consciousness, he must also reject it *elsewhere*, and announce the *reductio ad absurdum* of doubt, which confounds all knowledge whatever, he may—as we have seen—very well decline to concern himself, till such time as a reasoned argument is set before him to the effect that two and two can by no possibility make four—an argument equal in force to his own which demonstrates the inconsequence of the belief in Freedom. And as this is not likely soon to be done, it might almost seem that Freedom, as an article of belief, is a little in a bad way. And so indeed, it must be, so long as the argument is pursued on the mere ground of the logical understanding. But if reason good can be shown for discrediting the competence of the logical understanding to treat authoritatively of such a subject, in its very nature seen to *transcend* logic, as soaring or sinking into the region of aboriginal mystery, the 'final inexplicability, at which, as Sir 'W. Hamilton observes, we inevitably arrive when 'we reach ultimate facts' (*Mill*, p. 242), the aspect of the case seems altered a little; and we may find ourselves in a position to re-assert the integrity of consciousness, vindicate Freedom as given in it, along with Moral Responsibility; and even, if the logical

argument against these be still dogmatically pressed, to retort with effect on the opponent the charge of being wildly illogical, so confidently hurled at all believers in at least the article of Freedom.[1]

In identifying the *Will* with the human personality —and this we must either decisively do, or exclude the term from the discussion, on pain of rushing into such dreadful confusions as those we have had occasion to note in Mr. Mill—we seem to carry the subject into a region of thought, in which the mere Logician is as helplessly baffled as a bird would be, let loose in an impalpable ether.

'Waving his pennons vain, plump down he drops.'

Is the Will of man free? is Man a free agent? These are identical phrases; and the Will can plainly be nothing but a synonyme of the Ego, or veritable *persona* of the man, as operative in his conscious act. Is the fact of Personality denied? this is the merest extravagance and deliration of scepticism; is it sought

[1] The stricter kind of reader may be apt to suspect confusion at some points of the above, as in fact to some trivial extent there is perhaps. It seems admitted, in parts, that the belief in Freedom is held 'in defiance of Reason,' and though 'contradicted' by it. This is only, however, meant to be provisionally admitted, from the point of view of the opponent. It will be seen that there is no contradiction; that the only Reason defied and contradicted, is Reason falsely so called—a Logic at once narrow and arrogant, which constitutes itself the measure of Possibility, and dogmatically implies the proposition, that whatever is by its processes *inexplicable*, is therein branded as needs untrue and absurd.

to be logically *explained?* this is the absurdest, insane pretension of reason, so called, logical. In the Ego, we are face to face with a mystery, ever the more felt to be inscrutable, the more profound is the effort of abstraction, by which we strive to compass apprehension of it. Probably to only a few, and not even to these, save in rare and favoured moments of vision, is it given to look to any depth into the abyss of wonder and awe, which here for the most part lies veiled from us—so best perhaps—by what Professor Ferrier calls 'the law of familiarity.' Mr. Carlyle has said of *Music*, that it 'is a kind of inarticulate un-' fathomable speech, which *leads us to the edge of the* ' *Infinite*, and lets us for moments gaze into *that.*' Foolishness as it must needs be to a certain class of readers, this seems to express with as much precision as may be, what one is here ineffectually aiming at. To say that the questions of the Divine and the Human Personality are properly but forms of the same question, would be somewhat a bold statement; yet the one is, in truth, no more *incomprehensible* than the other; nor will any merely speculative difficulty which besets the mystery of a Being, infinite, and yet as personal, only to be conceived of under some form of human limitation, ever, I believe, be matter of grave perplexity to any one who in the least adequately appreciates the depth of that other mystery with which, on the finite ground, he is every

instant in contact. The human personality accepted, we must accept as utterly 'inexplicable;' '*Believe* it thou must; *understand* it thou canst not,' remains for ever the formula under which we must dispose of the Ego. And if what we call the Will—as it can be no otherwise—be simply the Ego, as it flashes into conscious act, plainly, in virtue of this formula, the topic of Freedom, is one not to be dogmatically dealt with under the forms of the understanding. The Ego admitted utterly mysterious and inscrutable, the property of Freedom attributed to it can scarce, in the eye of Reason, be held discredited, *merely* as also mysterious. That in Locke's phrase, we 'see not the way of it,' seems no insuperable objection, when it is shown that in the very nature of the case, it is plainly impossible we *should*. What sort of frantic Logic is it which, admitting a mystery, insists that it shall not be mysterious; accepts as a postulate the inexplicable; proceeds to lay down the law to it; and brands as wildly irrational so modest a *caveat* as this, that the inexplicable cannot be explained, yet is not therefore to be held incredible?

It is granted that were the Ego thrice over mysterious, *unless on good ground shown*, it is incompetent to assign to it any special mysterious attribute. But the grounds on which we assert for it the attribute of Freedom are such as, if candidly weighed, it will not be easy to gainsay. In the testi-

mony of Consciousness, or—if Mr. Mill prefers it—universal, indefeasible conviction, we have really, as Clarke well puts the matter, all the proof of it we can conceive possible, the truth of the thing being assumed—a proof indeed undemonstrative, but not therefore to be set aside, demonstrative proof being by the very nature of the case excluded. Further, apart from a belief in Freedom—not as excluding Causation, but as somehow—though *how* we know not—co-existing with it in human action on terms of reciprocal limitation—we cannot on rational grounds continue to attribute validity to our moral Nature. So complete is the havoc, in this sphere involved in denial of it, that, as we have seen, *moral* distinction is not any longer to be substantiated between a sane man and a maniac.[1] Quite possibly, there *is* no such distinction; *all* such distinctions *may* be illusory; and what we call Conscience merely an idiot hallucination. But this is an extreme view;—and the balance of probability seems to incline the other way; it does really seem to be probable that sane men are not maniacs. We have thus, in favour

[1] The *physical* distinction is of course clear; the *intellectual* distinction also might readily enough be indicated in the different relations to *motive*—what is the *moral* distinction between a sane man and a maniac? I can imagine none save that stated, as we have seen, by Mr. Mill, of *control* over action in the one, and want of this power of control in the other. And once for all, the power to control or *help* our actions is—Freedom. Failing of this, all moral distinetion is obliterated between sane and insane action. (*Vide* p. 109.)

of human Freedom—though still nothing to be called a demonstration—a distinct additional probability; and these two items of probable proof—the only kind of proof which the nature of the case admits of—seem sufficient to *balance* the stringent logical demonstration on the other side, which includes the human volition with all else, under the one grand law of Causation. Each line of proof seems, on its own ground, good; each seems convicted of impotence, invading the territory of the other. The proof which for Freedom may be held appropriate and sufficient, is naught as against Causation, and might with quite as good effect be employed to subvert a proposition of Euclid; the Logic which approves Causation, pressing on to a denial of Freedom, vainly seeks to soar into the heaven of pure ether, unpermitted to its presumptuous wing. Had, indeed, the logical demonstration succeeded in exhibiting Freedom as an express *contradictory* of Causation, the case would have been somewhat different; we should *then* have had to choose between one or other of the beliefs; to constitute ourselves on the one hand, intellectually *felo de se*, as denying the causation of human actions, or, on the other, in the denial of Freedom, maniacs, no longer amenable to moral law. But it is not, I suppose, pretended,—or if so, it is *merely* pretended—that Freedom has thus been shown to be incredible, as *contradictory* of a truth of Science; that it is not

itself a demonstrable truth of Science is all that will ever be shown; and nobody now asserts it such. That actions are *caused*, yet *free!* in this there is no contradiction;[1] the causation is admitted proved; the freedom admitted *not* proved—this is really all. If the Causationist, having proved his side of the case, asks with clamorous triumph—*how* free? he is quietly answered by Tennyson, 'we *know not* how,' by Locke, that he 'sees not the way of it;' and may further, if need be, be answered that 'the way of it' is probably one of the things which the angels desire to look into, and cannot. No one who understands but a little of the subject would in the least be surprised to know that, at this very instant of time, the 'way of it,' supposing it a truth, is a puzzle to the Angel Gabriel. Why then, if attested to us by the evidence which seems appropriate—in point of fact the *only* evidence which the nature of the case admits of—should it be held intellectual sin in us, to profess a belief in Freedom? Above all, why should Mr. Mill hold it sin in us, himself all the while believing it, though shy of professing his belief? His in-

[1] That actions are caused yet uncaused, determined yet undetermined—in this there is contradiction; that actions are determined, yet self-determined—that man in his actions, is determined *ab extra*, or in effect, by causes, the iron series of which stretches back into the past infinite, and yet in some sense and measure *ab intra*, by *himself*, or *freely*—in this no one can allege contradiction, however impossible it may be to explain the co-inherence in human action of the two factors, and the terms of their reciprocal limitation.

valuable 'Doctrine of Causation' being left to him as good as intact—the trivial inroad upon it being that what was before 'unconditional Causation' is now in the volitional sphere mysteriously *conditioned* or limited by Freedom, with no serious harm to it as Causation—why should not Mr. Mill accept the conciliatory wisdom of Hamilton, and taking Freedom with Necessity, 'believe both and both in unison,' even though 'this conciliation is of the things to be believed, not understood,' seeing that only thus can we compose the internecine strife indicated as otherwise inevitable between the intellectual and the moral constituents of our Nature? Except that he did not seem quite to *catch* Hamilton's wisdom, thinking plainly that in 'conciliating' two 'opposite philosophical opinions' Sir William intended to deny one of them, there seems really no reason why Mr. Mill should not have accepted it. 'That propositions 'which, as our intelligence is now constituted, obsti-'nately remain irreconcileable, may yet somehow, 'beyond the sphere of that intelligence, admit of 'being reconciled, seems no such extravagant pro-'position.'[1] I have read Mr. Mill to little purpose, if, considered as a simple proposition,—apart from the special application of it—he would scout it as the least extravagant. At page 150, we find him censure an adversary for 'confounding two different things—

[1] *Mill and Carlyle*, page 111.

'the belief in contradictories, and the recognition of 'positive truths which merely limit one another, but 'to what extent or at what points, we cannot yet 'determine.' Is perhaps Mr. Mill himself, in regard of Causation, as related to human Freedom, involved in this very confusion?

The line of reasoning here indicated, which seeks to rescue Freedom from the logical ban pronounced on it as inexplicable, by the identification of the Will with the mystery of the human personality, of which Logic is utterly incompetent to treat, is of course only available, so long as this incompetence is admitted.[1] And it is not by all thinkers admitted; for whilst nobody recognising the reality of the Ego, has ever pretended to 'explain' it, as comprehensible on

[1] It was, if I mistake not, Coleridge, who first among us decisively took this ground, and remanded the discussion to a sphere, in which it might safely contemn the tyranny of the logical understanding. There, as elsewhere, however, his reader is more or less bored by his famous distinction between the Reason and the Understanding, which never, at least in *his* hands,—whatever in those of Kant it may have done,—seemed to attain anything like scientific precision. Since Coleridge, it is to Professor Ferrier that the reader may be best referred for light upon this topic. In his *Institutes of Metaphysic*, it is only casually glanced at; but his early work, *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Consciousness*, abounds with pregnant suggestion upon it. This performance he was wont in his later time to pooh-pooh a little, saying, as I have heard him do when asked why he had not thought of reprinting it from *Blackwood*, that he *had* once or twice *thought* of it, but could never quite convince himself it was altogether worth the pains. It would have been pity if in editing his *Philosophical Remains* his literary executors had not decided the matter differently.

grounds of reason, hardy speculators have now and then appeared, who considered that the Ego, which reason could not explain, it might competently decline to accredit, as yielding to the sceptical analysis. With some glance at this extreme position, I may fitly conclude the discussion.

The great name of Hume, who accepting the reasoning of Berkeley which attacked the reality of Matter, proceeded to apply it to the Mind, evaporated as also an illusion, is of course, above all others, associated with this extreme of speculation. It is however, in some distinct sense, unjustly so. I have said that such a view is the mere extravagance and deliration of Scepticism; and there is evidence that by Hume himself it had come to be so considered. In his early work it is—'A Treatise of Human Nature'—that this wild speculation is developed. The material of this book, 'which the author had projected before 'he left College, and which he wrote and published 'not long after' in later life, he 'cast anew' in his *Essays*, complaining of opponents, who 'have taken 'care to direct all their battering against that juvenile 'work which the author never acknowledged,' and desiring that 'henceforth the following Pieces may 'alone be regarded as containing his philosophical 'sentiments and principles.' And in these Pieces, which contain the final and only authoritative digest of Hume's views, no trace did he permit to remain of

that crude boyish speculation. From the Nihilism, as it is termed, which in his youth he announced, Hume must thus, in his maturity, be held to have implicitly retired, as seeing that a scepticism so extreme was discredited even as a sport of dialectic—in which light not a little of what he retained may with much plausibility be regarded. And a scepticism by Hume discarded as untenable, subsequent thinkers need scarcely have tried to reinstate. The attempt has however been made; and among eminent writers now living, Professor Bain and Mr. Mill are to be noted, as not indisposed to assume the cast clothes of Hume here. In his interesting discussion of the question of 'Liberty and Necessity' (vide *The Emotions and the Will*, pp. 539-567)—a discussion in much to be taken objection to, but nowhere at least involved in the confusions which are rather, in Mr.[1] Mill's case, to be held the rule than the exception—we find Professor Bain thus writing—'"Self-deter-

[1] It must be said, however, that Professor Bain succeeds in escaping from the confusions in which Mr. Mill is entangled, mainly by the easy method (also adopted by Hume—see Appendix) of *evading* the essential difficulty. His remarks on 'Moral Inability—the Offender's Plea,' amount to a positive negation of *Moral* Responsibility, as distinct from Responsibility *simple*, or mere Punishment with a view to conduct in the future, 'such as we inflict on a cur to teach it to respect the carpet.' When *expressly*, in the next chapter, Moral Responsibility falls to be treated of, it is discussed in the most meagre and perfunctory way. Defining it as simple *Punishability*, Professor Bain, in the very few remarks he makes, writes exclusively from the *legal*, and absolutely *ignores* the *moral* point of view.

'"mination" assumes something more than spon-
'taneity, having a lurking reference to some power
'behind the scenes, that cannot be stated under the
'form of a specific motive or end. . . . If Self-deter-
'mination is held to imply something different from
'the operation of the motive forces of pleasurable
'and painful sensibility, coupled with the central
'spontaneity of the system, there is an imputation on
'the sufficiency of the common analysis of the mind.
'Emotion, Volition, and Intellect, as explained with
'full detail in the present work, must still leave a
'region unexplored. A fourth, or residual depart-
'ment, would need to be constituted, the department
'of "self" or Me-ation, and we should set about the
'investigation of the laws (or the anarchy) prevailing
'there, as in the three remaining branches.'

Precisely so; *rem acu tetigit;* here is the very kernel of the matter. If there be truly a living subject, Mind, or *Me* (certainly, if we suppose it to exist, 'not to be stated under the form of a specific motive or end'), of which Emotion, Volition, Intellect, are mere states, or modes of activity, we certainly demand a Me-ation in addition to that so-called 'analysis of the mind,' which concerns itself with these mere modes of its manifestation. Without this there is certainly an 'imputation on the sufficiency' of the 'common analysis,' considered as an analysis of *the mind, or Me.* A department of Me-ation would distinctly 'need to

be constituted,' in order to the exhaustiveness of the inquiry; but as clearly it can never be constituted, the *Me* being necessarily unable to get *behind itself*,[1] so to speak, the most exhaustive inquiry possible to us 'must still leave a region unexplored,' in which Freedom—who knows?—may have its home. This, Professor Bain perfectly well sees; and by way of getting rid of the difficulty, he quite coolly denies the existence of the mind as anything but merely the observed sum of its own states. 'The proper meaning of *self* can be nothing more than my corporeal 'existence, coupled with my sensations, thoughts, 'emotions, and volitions, supposing the classification 'exhaustive, and the sum of these in the past, present, and future.' But these states are *observed* states—observed by the *me* as *its own;* states of which *I* am conscious, and of which I am conscious as *mine*—they are '*my* corporeal existence, coupled with *my* sensations,' etc. The *Me* is of necessity admitted in the very act of denying it. Without a permanent existence calling itself 'I,' how comes it that these stray sensations, etc., in the past, present, and future, are found to sum themselves in unity as *mine?* Further—'I am not able to concede the existence of 'an inscrutable entity in the depths of one's being, to

[1] 'Can I give a reason for that, beyond the circle of which I cannot 'go, without at the same time overstepping the limits of my own existence?'—FICHTE.

'which the name *I* is to be distinctively applied, and 'not consisting of any bodily organ or function, or 'any one mental phenomenon that can be specified. 'We might as well talk of a mineral as different from 'the sum of all its assignable properties. A piece of 'quartz is an aggregate of inertia, specific gravity, 'etc. etc. etc. The aggregate is the quartz' own self, 'essence, or whatever other designation marks it off 'from other minerals.' One needs scarce offer serious reply to this. Who that knew what he was about would ever speak—as here Professor Bain implicitly makes his opponents do—of something which he calls his *Being*, and then of 'an inscrutable entity' called his *self* or *I*, distinct from that Being, and presumed to be resident somewhere 'in the depths of it'? Who ever asked the Professor to 'concede' anything so preposterous as this? Seems it not plain that a *self* or *I* is asserted, not as distinct from, but one with the veritable *Being* of the man—an 'inscrutable entity' indeed, yet not in Professor Bain's sense inscrutable, as under some supposed necessity of being a denizen of 'the depths of *itself*,' and presumably excluded from its surface. Similar is the confusion of objecting to a mind or Ego 'not consisting of any bodily organ or function, or any one mental phenomenon.' An Ego or mind which should 'consist of bodily organs' —arms or legs to wit, which can be cut off and presented to us on the dissecting-table, the Ego remain-

ing intact as before—or of 'bodily functions,' such as digestion, seems somewhat an obscure conception. Not much more lucid is that of a mind consisting of 'mental phenomena.' Phenomena are needs phenomenal of something; mental phenomena must needs be phenomenal of the entity we designate Mind—an entity in its proper nature unknown, yet essential as ground of the phenomena. As to the quartz illustration, it is naught, and to be set aside as sinning in the extrusion of Consciousness, the sole matter to be explained. The bit of quartz is before me, and I know, and can only know it, as an aggregate of certain properties; the *me* also I have cognisance of, solely through the aggregate of its sensations, thoughts, etc., but these do not, as the properties in the other case, exhaust the sum of my knowledge, for I know them in the aggregate as *mine*. *How* without a *Me* presupposed, come they to *so* aggregate themselves? Plainly a *Me* must be assumed as the very principle of aggregation. What are sensations which are '*my* sensations,' yet *not*-mine, as not belonging to a *me*? Speculations, which can only be stated in these gross forms of contradiction, may be held to bring with them their own confutation. When Professor Bain, therefore, concludes—'A self-determining power then, 'in a voluntary agent, is merely another, and not a 'good, expression for *the ordinary course of the will*, '*as we understand it*,' he seems to say nothing to the

purpose; the region of Will or Personality, when he has done all he can with 'volition,' being left behind him 'unexplored,' so that properly he can be said to *understand* nothing whatever of it.

The futility of the whole speculation, it is hoped, will further and conclusively appear, on a review of Mr. Mill's contribution to the subject in his Chapter entitled, 'The Psychological Theory of Matter, how far applicable to the Mind.' With Mr. Mill's Psychological Theory of Matter we are not here directly concerned, further than as it seems necessary to fix its postulates. These are sensation, expectation—with memory as the necessary condition of it—association of ideas, and 'the human mind as capable' of all these. So much granted him, Mr. Mill proceeds to resolve what deludes us as the external non-ego of matter into mere 'permanent possibilities of sensation.' The discussion is of much interest, and in its way may be ranked as a masterpiece of ingenuity. It seems to admit of question indeed, whether the element of *permanence*—on which plainly lies the stress of the proof—is fairly deduced from the premises. To myself it looks a little as if Mr. Mill, *more suo*, rather smuggles it in as he proceeds, making quiet 'conveyance' of it, as it were, from the material world, some *eidolon* of which he is engaged in trying to construct, than exhibits it as in rational process evolved. Further, it seems a little unfortunate that Mr. Mill, in

assuming sensation, and proceeding to work with it as a fact, of which no explanation is needed, has really left behind him unsolved, one might almost say, the whole problem.[1] Still, sensations and the rest given him, Mr. Mill, with a little help from permanence as he goes, really succeeds in producing a very pretty *eidolon* of matter, and proving it, when produced, quite as serviceable as the real thing. So much achieved, and his spick and span new creation of Matter seeming to him all very good, it occurred to Mr. Mill, in what I must really think a hapless moment, that perhaps an *eidolon* of Mind might be

[1] Given the Ego, sensation is developed in it as an *effect*, some cause of which must be assigned. What is this cause? The Ego in sensation *self*-determined? This does not of itself seem a very feasible speculation, though I vaguely suppose Fichte, at one moment of his development, may have held something of the kind; and as mere matter of course, to Mr. Mill it would be specially abhorrent. If the Ego, then, be not determined to sensation *ab intra*, it must needs be determined *ab extra*; in other words, by some form of a *non*-Ego. There does not seem any escape from this. Shall we assume this non-Ego, as in the system of the Natural Realist, a *material* entity known as the external world; or a *spiritual* one with the Super-Natural Realists—so call them—of whom Berkeley may stand as type? It does not seem to greatly matter which; at any height of speculation, more especially in the light of the 'Doctrine of Relativity,' now very generally acquiesced in, the distinction between them seems pretty much to disappear. Suffice it, there is given, in either case, the Ego as real, and, external to it, a universe of real existence. If belief in some form of non-Ego is thus, under the law of Causation forced on us by the very necessities of thinking, Mr. Mill may make what he will, and welcome, of the particular form of it apprehended as *matter* in consciousness. Nobody is much interested to protect from his attack the Matter, of which, as truly and in itself existing, nobody professes to know anything whatever.

come at on the same terms. Sensation being postulated as before, and along with it now, the circle of 'our internal feelings'[1] Mr. Mill seeks accordingly to show, that what we call Mind is sufficiently accounted for as no more than 'the series of those feelings supplemented by Possibilities of feeling;' that the entity called Mind has, in point of fact, no existence. But has Mr. Mill really forgotten, that in originally 'postulating sensation, expectation,' etc., he was obliged to postulate 'a mind capable' of them; therefore an entity of Mind—non-entities being 'capable' of nothing—of which postulate necessary to his first

[1] 'Thus far there seems no hindrance to our regarding Mind as no-'thing but the series of our sensations (to which must now be added 'our internal feelings) as they actually occur, with the addition of in-'finite possibilities,' etc.

There seems in this to be some confusion. Mr. Mill, who has just to his own satisfaction argued away *externality*, seems here to define sensation, as by contrast, an *external* feeling. It would be foolish, however, to press, as against Mr. Mill, a confusion which, considered in itself, he no doubt could readily explain as no more than merely verbal. More pertinent, perhaps, is the following little objection:—Mr. Mill defines Mind here as 'nothing but the series of our *sensations*,' together with our 'internal feelings,'—certain Possibilities being superadded. Now, either Mr. Mill *does* or does *not* distinguish sensation as, in some *real* sense, *external*, from those other expressly styled '*internal* feelings.' If he *does*, he seems to admit the non-Ego, which he has argued out of existence. If, on the other hand, he does *not*, some further explanation seems required; for that very 'series of sensations and Possibilities of Sensation,' which, in *this* Chapter, are concreted into the Ego, figured in the *last* as concreted into the *non*-Ego. How this should be, except in virtue of the fundamental *antithesis* asserted by Hamilton, and by Mr. Mill resolutely denied, Mr. Mill can perhaps explain; but meantime he has not done so. It seems almost essential that he should.

demonstration, he must be held to give himself the benefit in the second, when anew he assumes sensation, together with 'internal feeling,' and of course 'expectation,' as before. Plainly, Mr. Mill must have forgotten it. To postulate a capable entity Mind was legitimate for Mr. Mill in an argument to prove the non-existence of Matter, but scarcely in one intended to prove the non-existence of Mind. What logical fallacy is it, in virtue of which, assuming a thing to exist, we proceed to prove that it does not, and exhibit as result of our reasonings the negation of their own premises? So far as I am aware, it has not as yet got a name, perhaps as occurring so seldom. If we call it a *petitio principii*, run mad like a sceptical philosopher, into questioning its own existence, we seem to come as near it as may be. And of this most egregious of fallacies, Mr. Mill is here, beyond all question, guilty. Suppose Mr. Mill—in this following what is plainly the philosophical order—had *begun* by applying his 'Psychological Theory' to *Mind*, instead of beginning, as he does, with *Matter*, one is curious to know how he would have proceeded. With the result at which he aims in view, it would hardly have done to postulate, *in express terms*, 'a mind capable of expectation,' etc.; and a sensation or feeling, without any sentient subject, and *itself*[1] capable of expec-

[1] *Vide* Professor Mansel (*Prologomena Logica*, p. 139).

' Does it not rather appear a flat self-contradiction to maintain that I

tation, is perhaps too wild a figment for even Mr. Mill to take up with. His 'Psychological Theory of Mind' would thus have fairly foundered on his hands in trying to take its very first step. As it is, it only succeeds in making way at all, by quietly carrying on from the one chapter a postulate, which stultifies the result laboriously arrived at in the other.

Further, Mr. Mill, having with great pains defended his *Theory of Mind* from certain 'extrinsic objections' alleged as fatal to it, proceeds to admit with great frankness, that 'the theory has intrinsic difficulties 'beyond the power of metaphysical analysis to 'remove,' the phenomena of Memory and Expectation 'reducing us to the alternative of believing that 'the Mind or Ego is something different from any 'series of feelings or possibilities of them, or of 'accepting the paradox, that something which, *ex*

'am not immediately conscious of myself, but only of my sensations or 'volitions? Who, then, is this I that is conscious, and how can I be 'conscious of such states as *mine?* In this case, it would surely be far 'more accurate to say, not that I am conscious of my sensations, *but* '*that the sensation is conscious of itself;* but thus worded, the glaring 'absurdity of the theory would carry with it its own confutation.'

Now, distinctly Mr. Mill either must postulate 'a Mind,' or this 'glaring absurdity' he must postulate. Beaten from his postulate of a Mind, it is here that he must hide his head; and indeed he may well hide it, for the absurdity is by himself admitted glaring; 'a sensation conscious of itself' being precisely identical in ineptitude with the 'series of sensations and feelings aware (or conscious) of itself as a series,' in which Mr. Mill, with great frankness, to conclude, admits a quite hopeless paradox. Yet this paradox of 'a sensation conscious of itself,' and, a little to increase the absurdity, 'capable of expectation' to boot, has become the postulate of his argument.

'*hypothesi*, is but a series of feelings, can be aware of 'itself as a series.' (In other words, Mr. Mill, having postulated Expectation—in which Memory must be held presupposed—admits himself slain by his own postulate.) It has commonly been supposed that speculations admitted to involve insuperable difficulties, and to lead into incredible paradox, therein are, in effect, admitted to be utterly worthless speculations. Mr. Mill, however, as neither inclined to admit his speculation worthless, nor resolute enough in absurdity to accept the paradox it leads to, proceeds to save himself thus—

'The truth is, that we are here face to face with 'that final inexplicability, at which, as Sir W. Hamil- 'ton observes, we inevitably arrive when we reach 'ultimate facts; and in general, one mode of stating 'it only appears more incomprehensible than another, 'because the whole of human language is accom- 'modated to the one, and is so incongruous with the 'other, that it cannot be expressed in any terms 'which do not deny its truth. The real stumbling- 'block is perhaps not in any theory of the fact, but 'in the fact itself. The true incomprehensibility per- 'haps is, that something which has ceased or is not 'yet in existence, can still be in a manner present; 'that a series of feelings, the infinitely greater part of 'which is past or future, can be gathered up, as it were, 'into a single present conception, accompanied by a

'belief of reality. I think, by far the wisest thing we 'can do, is to accept the inexplicable fact, without 'any theory of how it takes place; and when we are 'obliged to speak of it, in terms which assume a theory, 'to use them with a reservation as to their meaning.'

With every respect for what Mr. Mill considers 'by far the wisest thing we can do,' I cannot but think Mr. Mill would have done a much wiser thing, had he simply admitted as a datum of consciousness, the Ego which, as he confesses, his Psychological method has utterly failed to evolve; and which, however in itself inexplicable, satisfactorily explains the phenomena. As it is, he seems here a little to lie open to the criticism he himself has elsewhere—and I think with justice—directed against Sir W. Hamilton (pp. 544, 545): 'He lays the responsibility of the failure not 'upon his theory (of Pleasure), but upon the general 'inexplicability of ultimate facts. This appears to 'me a great misconception, on our author's part, of 'what may rightfully be demanded from a theorist. 'He is not entitled to *frame a theory from one class* '*of phenomena, extend it to another class which it does* '*not fit, and excuse himself by saying that if we cannot* '*make it fit, it is because ultimate facts are inex-* '*plicable.*' Mr. Mill seems in this, with some closeness, to describe his own procedure. Again—'If we 'do propound a theory, we are bound to prove all it 'asserts; it is not philosophical to assert a thing, and

'fall back upon the incomprehensibility of the sub-'ject, as a dispensation from proving it. *What is a* '*hindrance to proving a theory ought to be a hindrance* '*to affirming it.*' In which last sentence Mr. Mill must be held to satisfactorily *expunge* his own Chapter on the 'Psychological Theory of Mind.'

These little griefs are, however, as nothing to those which Mr. Mill presently goes on to earn for himself, as obstinately determined not to concede to Hamilton the Ego as given in Consciousness. The opening paragraph of his next Chapter (XIII. 'The Psychological Theory of the Primary Qualities of Matter') probably includes as much blunder and ineptitude as any Philosopher has ever yet succeeded in packing in the same space.

'For the reasons which have been set forth, I con-'ceive Sir W. Hamilton to be wrong in his statement 'that a Self and not-Self are immediately appre-'hended in our primitive consciousness. We have, in 'all probability, no notion of Not-self, until after con-'siderable experience of the recurrence of sensations 'according to fixed laws, and in groups. But without 'the notion of Not-self, we cannot have that of Self 'which is contrasted with it. Nor is it credible that 'the first sensation which we experience awakens in 'us any notion of an Ego or Self. To refer it to an 'Ego is to consider it as part of a series of states of 'consciousness, some portion of which is already past.

'The identification of a present state with a remembered state cognised as past, is what, to my thinking, constitutes the cognition that it is I who feel it. "I" means he who saw, touched, or felt something yesterday or the day before. No single sensation can suggest personal identity; this requires a series of sensations, thought of as forming a line of succession, and summed up in thought into a Unity.'

Not only is it entirely 'credible' that 'the first sensation we *experience*' may 'awaken in us a notion of the Ego,' but—except for his own express testimony to that effect—I should have held it utterly *in*credible that a man like Mr. Mill should conceive of the fact as otherwise. The 'first sensation we experience' is, of course, a fact of 'consciousness;' sensations which are not in consciousness can be plainly no part of our 'experience.' Now, how are we to define Consciousness? Hamilton defines it as 'the recognition by the *mind* or *Ego* of *its own* acts or affections;' and 'in this,' says Mr. Mill, 'as he *truly* observes, "*all* philosophers are agreed."' Consequently, as Mr. Mill does not probably mean to exclude himself as in a minority of one, and *no* philosopher, he accepts Hamilton's definition. And accepting it, he must also accept—however against the grain—the Ego apprehended in primitive sensation, as conscious of, or 'cognising its own affection;' unless indeed—which seems a little too absurd—he is

prepared to maintain that we can 'experience' sensations, without in the least being 'conscious' of them. Mr. Mill's whole Chapter XII. 'The Psychological Theory of Matter, how far applicable to Mind,' is thus at one stroke demolished. This for Mr. Mill seems sufficiently grievous, but a worse grief is behind. For, the Ego being thus given us in primitive consciousness—and this Mr. Mill can only deny by rushing upon the wild absurdity above—the Non-Ego is, according to Mr. Mill himself, *given us along with it.* 'Without the notion of *not*-Self, we cannot have that of Self which is contrasted with it.' The Not-self, even if it could no otherwise be got at, is thus legitimated by the Self,—given as we have seen,—in this necessary 'relation of contrast,' by Mr. Mill himself insisted on. Mr. Mill's Chapter XI., therefore, 'The Psychological Theory of the Belief in an External World,' must fleet into the limbo of abortions along with Chapter XII.; and—sad to say—Chapter XI. about 'Matter' having fleeted in that direction, Chapter XIII. about 'The Primary Qualities of Matter,' may plainly, without curious inquiry into it, be also held to have fleeted. It seems probable that considerable sections of Mr. Mill's previous direct *criticism* of *Hamilton's Review of Theories on the Belief of an External World*, would on any strict examination of it, be found to have gone the same road. Mr. Mill writes a good deal of criticism; he

supplements it with *three* Chapters of original and highly ingenious speculation; then, *presto*, in about as many sentences (when we have merely pulled them about a little), he is found to have conclusively shattered his own most imposing fabric. Has any feat comparable to this been brought home by him to Sir W. Hamilton? I trow not. What is specially to be insisted on is this, that my criticism of Mr. Mill here—which I venture to think cannot at any point be evaded—shuts him up to acquiescence in the very doctrine, against which throughout he is arguing—Hamilton's doctrine to wit, that 'Consciousness gives 'as an ultimate fact, a primitive duality, the Ego and 'Non-Ego in an original synthesis and antithesis.' Mr. Mill, in arguing *against* Hamilton, is here—though strangely unaware of the fact—in true and fundamental agreement with him. *Here*, at least, it seems shown that the relation of Mr. Mill to Hamilton is not of that absolutely triumphant kind which his idolaters have been eager to assume it.[1]

[1] The above is reproduced *verbatim* from a little paper published some considerable time before the issue of Mr. Mill's third Edition of his work. That it ever came under the eye of Mr. Mill, I have no special reason to suppose. But that *somehow*, he had become uneasily aware that here he had brought himself to grief, is in his third Edition made evident. That fatal clause, 'But without the notion of Not-Self,' etc., he deletes, with this explanatory Note—'In the first Edition I 'said—"But without the notion of Not-Self, we cannot have that of '"Self which is contrasted with it." In saying this I overlooked the 'fact that my own sensations and other feelings, as distinguished from 'what I call Myself, are a sufficient Not-Self to make the Self appre-

Further—'No single sensation can suggest per-'sonal identity; this requires a series of sensations, 'thought of as forming a line of succession, and 'summed up in thoughts into a Unity.' This is granted; but with a single sensation as emerging in Consciousness, there emerges necessarily, as we saw, the Ego conscious of, or cognising it—the Personality;

'hensible. The contrast necessary to all cognition is sufficiently pro-'vided for by the antithesis between the Ego and particular modifica-'tions of the Ego.'

This is well; and might almost be held to show that Mr. Mill is not *now* 'in true and fundamental agreement with Hamilton,' though beyond all question he *was* so, when he issued his first Edition. And it is not unamusing to note, that in getting out of his agreement with Hamilton, he gets out of agreement with *himself*. For his admission of an original 'antithesis between the Ego and particular modifications of the Ego, sensations, and other feelings,' simply withers to the very root his 'Psychological Theory of Mind.' Moreover, as we saw (page 149), if Mr. Mill will only for an instant inquire as to the *cause* of these 'modifications of the Ego,' he will find, perhaps a little to his disgust, that he is *still* in so far 'in fundamental agreement with Hamilton,' as under his own pet law of Causation, constrained to admit either a self-determining Ego—which of course he would rather die than admit—or a Non-Ego of some sort, as a *real external existence*. For, however Mr. Mill might wish it otherwise, the '*Ex nihilo*,' etc., remains as an axiom unimpeachable, and a thing which does not exist, cannot exist as *cause*. Belief in some form of a Non-Ego being thus forced upon us by the very necessities of thinking (supposing we take the trouble to think), does Mr. Mill really suppose it of supreme importance to inquire as to the development of the Non-Ego, empirically apprehended in Consciousness? *Metaphysically* the inquiry is of *no* importance; *psychologically* it is of much interest for those who are interested in the spinning of cobwebs, and like to observe the operation; somewhat as a curious Naturalist may delight to watch a spider at work. From *this* point of view, Mr. Mill's elaborate speculation as to Matter is already sufficiently recognised, as a great *tour de force* of ingenuity.

and in order to the notion of identity, only one more sensation will be needed, cognised as also *mine*. Moreover, declining to admit the Ego, as thus emerging in primitive consciousness, it is surprising Mr. Mill should have failed to see that the Ego, as he himself proceeds to constitute it, could never at all have emerged. Nothing is more certain than that Mr. Mill's account of the Ego, as developed in *later* Consciousness, necessitates belief in it as given in a *previous* Consciousness, which Mr. Mill—the argument being merely pushed back a little—could be forced to recognise as *primitive*. 'To refer it (Sensa-'tion) to an Ego, is to consider it as part of a series 'of states of consciousness, some portion of which is 'already past. The identification of a present state 'with a remembered state cognised as past, is what, 'to my thinking, constitutes the cognition that it is I 'who feel it. "I" means he who saw, touched, or 'felt something yesterday or the day before.' But surely, in order that 'I' should have seen or touched something the day before, 'I' must *then* have been in existence; 'a remembered state cognised as past, 'and identified with a state now present,' must itself have been cognised as *present* in the past to which reference is made. In order to be *re*-cognised, and identified with a present sensation as also *mine*, plainly the sensation in the past, must *then* have been *so cognised*. At whatever point, therefore, in the

series of sensations, Mr. Mill makes the Ego commence its operations in remembrance and identification, he will be driven to admit that it must have commenced them *before*, as *cognizing* the thing it now remembers or *re*cognises. Unless, indeed, Mr. Mill's Ego has a talent for remembering what took place before it came into existence!

Turning to the explanatory Discussion, which Mr. Mill now appends to these Chapters, one is driven to conclude that an Ego of *this* kind is really that substituted by Mr. Mill for the Ego of primitive consciousness. We there find him writing—'Since the 'fact which alone necessitates the belief in an Ego, 'the one fact which the Psychological Theory cannot 'explain, is the fact of Memory (for Expectation I 'hold to be both psychologically and logically a 'consequence of Memory), I see no reason to think 'that there is any cognisance of an Ego, *until Memory* '*commences*. There seems no ground for believing 'with Sir W. Hamilton, and Mr. Mansel, that the 'Ego is an original presentation of consciousness; 'that the mere impression on our senses involves, 'or carries with it, any consciousness of a Self, any 'more than I believe it to do of a Not-self. Our 'very notion of a Self takes its commencement, there 'is every reason to suppose, from the *representation* '*of a sensation in Memory*, when awakened by the 'only thing there is to awaken it before any associa-

'tions have been formed, namely, the occurrence of 'a subsequent sensation similar to the former one. 'The fact of *recognising a sensation, of being reminded* '*of it*, and, as we say, remembering that it has been 'felt before, is the simplest and most elementary 'fact of Memory.'

This is an excellently clear statement; and see to what Mr. Mill is self-committed in it; to *re*presentations in memory, of sensations, whereof there was no previous *presentation;* to sensations *re*cognised or *re*minded in the present, and yet not in the past originally *cognised*, or *minded;* to 'subsequent sensations' by the Ego apprehended as '*similar* to former ones,' which the Ego, as not then in existence, could not possibly then have apprehended. Mr. Mill's Ego, as I said, is an Ego with the mysterious property of remembering things which took place some time before it was born.[1] Mr. Mill, in declining to admit

[1] All this is so well and clearly put by Professor Ferrier, that instead of *rehashing* him as here, I might have been well content simply to quote his masterly statement of it (vide *Institutes of Metaphysic*, pp. 81-2) :—

'A theory of self-consciousness, opposed to the doctrine advanced in 'our first proposition, has been sometimes advocated. It reduces this 'operation to a species of reminiscence; it affirms that we are *first* 'cognisant of various sensible impressions, and are not conscious of 'ourselves, until we reflect on them *afterwards*. But this doctrine 'involves a contradiction; for it supposes us to recollect certain im-'pressions to have been ours, *after* they have been experienced, which 'we did not know to be ours *when* they were experienced. A man 'cannot remember what never happened. If the impressions were not 'known to be ours at the time, they could not subsequently be remem-

in an Ego, so mysterious in its properties as this, such a trifle, by comparison, as Freedom, seems oddly to strain at a gnat, after just having swallowed a camel, as deftly as he might an oyster.

In fine—Mr. Mill, in now proceeding to further explain the position he before took up, writes—'Having stated these facts (of Memory and Expecta-'tion) as inexplicable by the Psychological Theory, I 'left them to stand as facts, without any theory what-'ever; not adopting the Permanent Possibility hypo-'thesis as a sufficient theory of Self, in spite of the 'objections to it, as some of my critics have ima-'gined, and have wasted no small amount of argu-'ment and sarcasm in exposing the untenability of 'such a position; neither, on the other hand, did I, 'as others have supposed, accept the common theory 'of Mind, as a so-called Substance.'

Mr. Mill seems in this to ignore the not unimportant fact before noted, that Memory and Expectation,

'bered to have been ours, because their recollection would imply that 'we remembered an antecedent connexion between ourselves and them; 'which connexion, however, had no place in our former experience, 'inasmuch as this theory declares that no self was in the first instance 'apprehended; therefore, if the impressions are recognised on reflec-'tion to have been ours, they must originally have been known to be 'ours. In other words, we must have been conscious of self at the 'time when the impressions were made.'

Could the 'impossible consciousness *before* consciousness,' which, at starting, I alleged to be involved in Mr. Mill's mode of conceiving the relations of *consciousness* and *experience*, possibly be better illustrated than as we find it in this passage?

though 'inexplicable' by the Theory he proposes, are quite satisfactorily explained by the ordinary theory of the Ego, *itself* inexplicable, yet accepted as a *datum*, or more properly, a necessary condition of Consciousness; a theory for which he admits, as we saw, thus much is always to be said, that 'the whole 'of human language is accommodated to it; and is 'so incongruous with the other, that it cannot be ex- 'pressed in any terms which do not deny its truth.' It seems to me that a theory which can say this for itself, and which is further commended to us as at once explaining the facts, which the other Theory is bound to explain and is driven to confess it cannot, is, of the two, very much the preferable Theory. But plainly Mr. Mill would do anything rather than admit it so. And yet, in effect, in the end he admits all that anybody wants of him. 'As such (an original 'element) I ascribe a reality to the Ego—to my own 'mind—different from that real existence as a Per- 'manent Possibility, which is the only reality I 'acknowledge in Matter; and by fair experiential 'inference from that one Ego, I ascribe the same 'reality to other minds.' This is, in truth, a virtual concession of all that Hamilton contends for, in assuming the Ego, as a fact, for which we have the authority of consciousness. If thus admitting a *reality* in the Ego, Mr. Mill still declines to admit it, as *Substance*, this seems only to mean that Mr. Mill

is at once constrained to admit, and yet determined to deny. If Mr. Mill does not define Substance precisely as he must the Ego—a Reality, in itself unknown, yet subsumed as a necessary ground of phenomena—'a bond of connexion to hold a group 'or series of otherwise unconnected phenomena 'together' (p. 246)—one is puzzled to guess how he would define it.

On the whole, I think we may conclude with some confidence, that if the argument from Personality, as neutralizing that against Freedom derived from the Causation of human actions, in itself be worth anything, it will not be seriously invalidated by any such sceptical resolution of the human Personality itself, as that by Mr. Mill here abortively suggested, and admitted by himself abortive.[1]

And here it may be well to conclude a Dissertation which has strayed considerably beyond the limits at first proposed for it. The Doctrine of 'Conciliation' set forth in it—essentially that, as I believe, by Hamilton meant to be indicated—which admits Necessity on the one hand (meaning only the Causation from which, in the exclusion of Freedom, Necessity

[1] A good deal of the ground covered by the foregoing Discussion is very ably and intelligently gone over in the concluding Sections of Professor Masson's *Review of Recent British Philosophy*; and while there is no great similarity in the general treatment here, yet the point of view at one or two places so closely approximates to his, that this reference seems only proper. Mr. Mill, in his Third Edition, has not answered Professor Masson's argument; nor could he, I think, have done so.

might seem to be a logical inference), yet combines with it a belief in Freedom, while admitting inability to explain the coinherence of the two in human action, or the terms of their reciprocal limitation, might readily be shown to be the only one which fits itself to all the facts, and adjusts the scale of the variations which prevail in our moral judgments. Further, it will be found that the sanity of these is compromised, precisely as we ignore, or even cease to assign its due importance to either one or other of these constituent factors of human action. Too exclusively dwelling on Necessity or the Causal influence, we find it difficult to attribute *blame* to any action whatever; the springs of healthy indignation are relaxed; and we reach that questionable habit of mind, in which a bastard charity is one with the deadliness of moral indifference. Too exclusively dwelling on Freedom, in oblivion of the awful pressure on 'the afflicted Will'[1] of causal circumstance and temptation, we are but too apt to sin in the opposite extreme of some rigour of harsh and inhuman judgment. In the one case, our sense of

[1] 'The dread strife
Of poor Humanity's afflicted Will
Struggling in vain with ruthless Destiny.'—*Excursion.*
By Wordsworth indicated as the root-Idea of all Tragedy. It finely expresses or implies the doctrine contended for. The Will of Man is not Free in the absolute sense; it is an 'afflicted Will,' as beset with tragical limitations, which, however they perpetually 'afflict,' do not yet annihilate it as Will.

merit and demerit in actions is apt to be unduly weakened in a cynical approximation of the two; in the other case, the opposite danger is incurred of undue exaggeration of both considered as extremes of divergence. Giving to each side of the complex truth its due; holding fast the Freedom of the Will, yet remembering always the tragical 'afflictions' to which it is causally subjected, we have ground, on the one hand, of stern and righteous rigour of judgment; on the other, of an infinite tenderness and compassion, a thoughtful charity which does not wholly exclude from its regards the vilest and most abandoned criminal who ever libelled our common humanity. And this is, I rather think, the ethical attitude, prescribed by our highest standards.[1]

If at all we are to divorce in our minds these two sides of the truth, on the whole it might not be amiss to consider chiefly the side of Freedom when taking account of our own rather questionable actions; that of Necessity in judging of those of our neighbours. In regard again of the *good* actions of ourselves and of others, it may be better perhaps to reverse this,—considering chiefly in ourselves the law of necessary Causation, that of Freedom[2] as the law of other

[1] Some excellent remarks on this subject may be found in the work of Dr. Travis, to which allusion was before made.

[2] 'The Law of Freedom!' The expression is at once scientifically absurd, and non-scientifically accurate. On the one hand we cannot conceive of Moral Freedom, except as an outrage of Causal Law; on

people. By merely attending to a couple of rules so simple and obvious as these, a man might almost flatter himself that, according to the measure of his attention to them, he was becoming as near as possible perfect in the matter of his moral judgments; by the discipline of humility on the one hand; on the other, of charity, forbearance, and genial recognition of the good as it lives all round him. But it is sufficiently obvious that this is seldom our way of arranging the matter; that we are a little apt, on the ground of necessary pressure and temptation, to excuse our own little trespasses, forgetting on the same ground to allow for those of our friends; on the ground of Freedom, to glorify our own little pitiful virtues and immunities, as if they were really *ours*, while tending a little to depreciate the perfections of others, as if scarcely so accurately *theirs*, as coming to them by virtue of happy circumstance, and mere necessities of Law and Nature. And apart from this it seems also uncommonly obvious that, practically, an admission of both sides of the com-

the other, we can only define it as a higher Law of Life, traversing that Causal one, whose sublimities are those of Death. A Law of Life! One wonders if it ever occurs to Mr. Mill and other gentlemen of the Omniscient school, to ask themselves what essentially they know about *Life*, in any form of it? According to the latest lights, the most advanced philosopher yet known can be positive as to nothing more than this about it,—that it is precisely some such unexplained 'Conciliation of Opposites' as that which he scouts as a puerile delusion, when asserted in the other, or Moral sphere.

plex truth, Causation or Necessity on the one hand, Freedom on the other, does largely and influentially determine the moral judgments of mankind—from which there might seem to be inference that the Conciliatory Doctrine, which includes both, is not very unlikely to be the true one.

While I am far from thinking that the question of theoretical belief on this subject is unimportant in its bearing upon practice, it is certain its practical influence may very readily be exaggerated; as in truth some tendency to exaggerate it is not unfrequently to be noted in writers on behalf of Freedom—to say nothing of the numerous enthusiasts on behalf of it, who, deprived of their gross exaggerations of this kind, would be left helplessly without an argument. The fallacy which underlies these exaggerations has already been sufficiently discussed (*vide* p. 114, *et seq.*) and need not again be more than merely glanced at. Whether—as one school of thinkers maintain—the Idea of Moral Distinctions be come at as a primary intuition, or vital fact of human Consciousness, or developed as a birth of Experience under the law of Association—as to which Mr. Mill is clear—is a question somewhat obscure. Happily, as thus obscure, it is also a little unimportant, like a good many other deep and obscure questions; and the sense of Moral Distinctions, so rooted in primal instinct, or in habit

which has almost the depth of that, may very well be trusted, in either case, to maintain itself in life and practice against the inroads of speculative Theory, accepted with whatever fulness of conviction; pretty much as the practical claims of Matter remain unaffected by the reasoning, however distinctly acquiesced in, which evaporates it into mere Idea and Illusion. This Analogy, however, does by no means so accurately go on all-fours that it could not be shown to limp a little;[1] and however it may be easy to exaggerate the probable effects on conduct of the Theory which, excluding Freedom, for every consistent thinker, excludes with it Moral Responsibility, it has not the less *tendencies* to influence conduct, which it is quite idle to suppose not at all expressed in the result. On this subject, as to which it would be easy to enlarge, two remarks only. Mr. Mill himself in a general way admits 'the *depressing* effect of 'the Fatalist Doctrine, as humiliating to Pride and 'paralysing to Desire of Excellence' (the believer in Freedom will do well to retain as much of it as may be found 'humiliating to Pride') admitting also that belief in Freedom has frequently 'given to its 'adherents a practical feeling, much nearer to the 'truth than has generally existed in the minds of 'Necessitarians, and fostered a stronger spirit of self-'culture' than the opinion to which it is opposed. It

[1] *Mill and Carlyle*, pp. 115-117.

seems to me that of two opinions, the one which is admitted to induce 'a practical feeling nearest to the truth' is rather more likely to be true than the other. (As before said, the *exact* truth is only to be hit by combining in a wretchedly illogical way the unharmonized, yet not contradictory opinions.) And, as we have abundantly seen, between Mr. Mill's Doctrine denying Freedom, and a Fatalistic one, the distinction is no more than the dream of an eminent Logician, whose Logic has for the time gone elsewhere. Further, it is the most familiar of all experiences that the fullest belief in Freedom does not prevent us from habitually using so much as we admit of Causation in temptation and malign conjunctions of Circumstance, as excuse to ourselves of any little lapse we may be guilty of. And what believing in Freedom, we thus do inevitably, unawares, and unconsciously, the belief in Freedom withdrawn, and Causation only believed in, there seems really some ground to suppose we might come to do in full Consciousness, and with express approval of Reason. It is in this way, and as subtle anodyne of one's own accusing Conscience, that practically the Doctrine of Necessity or Fate is most to be feared. Its effect, even in this way, may readily enough be exaggerated; and there does not seem the least risk to speak of, that, however it might lead us to a little excuse our own sins, it could ever make us sin in any

excess of leniency to those of our friends which might touch us in either skin or pocket.

The main interest of the question as to human Freedom is *speculative;* and however Mr. Mill—as we have seen—may exhibit himself unable to distinguish between the practical point of view and the speculative, the Speculative question remains, when the Practical one is dismissed as, by comparison, of little import. Further, at this day remaining, it is not unlikely to remain some little time longer. Science was really, in any accurate notion of it, *not first constituted as such*, when it attached to itself the title of Positive to conjure with. Positive Philosophy may be as positive as it will within its circle of certainty and demonstration, but there can never, for the souls of men not merely bewildered, be anything more to be revered in it than we find in the Multiplication Table, or in the plain Mathematical Axiom that two straight lines cannot enclose a space. (Mr. Mill, by the way, supposes that possibly they *may*—somewhere else.) The attempt to find anything more in it is really no whit less ridiculous, than if a delirated Mathematical Sage should go on all his life producing his straight lines, and announcing, in what we could scarce call a 'divine despair,' that though a Space was not yet enclosed, perhaps one of these days it would be, and that in fact he was quite *positive* it would. It seems quite safe to predict that the exaggerated claim made for

Science, writing *Positive* after its name, somewhat as a paltry *Parvenu* takes a pride in writing himself *Esquire*, will, one of these days, be smiled at by all intelligent people as merely the innocent deliration of such a Mathematical Sage. Meantime, the phenomenon is curious, as illustrating the depth of the Religious Principle. God the Father is plainly in many quarters, extinct as an object of worship. We have found out so many of his 'Laws,' that the difficulty of getting beyond them—more especially for those who have found them out—is one in all seriousness to be admitted. Some grand new 'Law' being discovered, what more natural than that the Discoverer should assert it distinctly *his* Law; furiously throttle a fellow Philosopher pretending to have a *priority;* and dispute any claim to Priority injuriously asserted for even the Deity himself? Nothing is more natural and obvious. The Deity is thus a little in abeyance just at present; and even so exalted a supporter as the Duke of Argyll has not so brought him into fashion again as one might have been disposed to expect. In these circumstances, it is comfortable to note the facility with which people who *ignore* the Deity—to *deny* him would be to admit him as a possible subject of speculation, and pay him too great a compliment—can take up with a Mathematical Axiom instead; and failing the Mathematical

Axiom—the discovery being made in mature years that the affections actually exist as the deepest constituents of human Nature—can substitute a Wife or a Mistress.

These frivolities apart, the question of Necessity and Freedom has been, is, and must remain positively *central* to the whole discussion which from age to age is perpetuated between the Philosophies of Belief and of Scepticism—the essential field of Battle, after skirmishing has been done at the outposts. Freedom, Personality (he who does not admit the terms identical discredits himself as incompetent)—*this* it is which distinguishes Man from dead matter and the brute. Is Man *free?* The question is identical with this other one—Is there in man a *spiritual* element not present in an oyster or other mollusc? Is man, in Shakespeare's profound and prescient phrase, 'the *slave* of Nature,'[1] or its Lord? This is essentially the question of questions in Philosophy; the question of the Will and its Freedom is essentially the question of questions determinant of any secure settlement of it. So wrangled over as it has been, almost a certain ridicule seems fairly enough directed against any one seriously concerning himself with it. But the ridicule is not the less idle; the World does not go on sillily wrangling for thousands of years about matters of no real importance to it.

[1] 'The slave of Nature and the son of Hell.'—*Richard III.*

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

NOTE—*vide* PAGE 91.

IN making Hume answerable for this argument, that in the light of the principle of Causation, the *first* is the only *efficient*, and therefore the only *responsible* cause, I cannot in strictness be held correct, seeing he states it only as a possible objection to be replied to. With Dr. Samuel Clarke, it was much a favourite, and under the form of assertion, that a *necessary agent* is *not* an agent at all;—the very phrase involving, as he insists, a contradiction in terms —it perpetually recurs in his writings on this very pet topic with him. He rather, however, with ponderous iteration, keeps hurling it at the heads of antagonists, than anywhere, that I remember, takes pains to develop it as a clear proposition of reason; so that a reader who does not bring the meaning with him, so to speak, might readily enough fail to find it. And the lucidity which the argument but indifferently attained in the hands of Clarke, it does not attain in those of Reid, who makes cool 'conveyance' of it, without any show of exposition. It might almost seem that he uses it at second-hand, in a puzzled kind of way, as a

safe thing to say, Clarke having said it so often, and plainly putting such stead upon it. I do not in this intend disrespect to Reid; but it is simply the truth of him, that nearly throughout, in his treatment of *this* subject, he blunders almost as dreadfully on the one side, as, more lately, Mr. Mill has contrived to do on the other. In Hume, on the other hand, who, at the close of his 'Essay' on the subject, admits in this argument an 'objection,' which he sees may be taken to his Doctrine, we find it very skilfully developed, under forms of logical statement.

'It may be said,' he writes, 'that if voluntary actions be 'subjected to the same laws of necessity with the opera-'tions of matter, there is a continued chain of necessary 'causes, pre-ordained, and predetermined, reaching from 'the original cause of all to every single volition of every 'human creature. No contingency anywhere in the uni-'verse, no indifference; no liberty. *While we act, we are 'at the same time, acted upon. The ultimate author of all our 'volitions is the Creator of the world, who first bestowed 'motion on this immense machine, and placed all beings in 'that particular position, whence every subsequent event, by an 'inevitable necessity, must result.* Human actions, therefore, 'either can have no moral turpitude at all, as proceeding 'from so good a cause; or if they have any turpitude, they 'must involve our Creator in the same guilt, while he is 'acknowledged to be their ultimate cause and author. For 'as a man who fired a mine is answerable for all the con-'sequences, whether the train he employed be long or 'short; so, *wherever a continued chain of necessary causes is*

'*fixed, that being either finite or infinite who produces the first,* '*is likewise author of all the rest, and must both bear the blame* '*and acquire the praise which belong to them.* Our clear and 'unalterable ideas of morality establish this rule, upon un-'questionable reasons, when we examine the consequences 'of any human action; and these reasons must still have 'greater force when applied to the volitions and intentions 'of a Being, infinitely wise and powerful. *Ignorance or* '*impotence may be pleaded for so limited a creature as man;* 'but those imperfections can have no place in our Creator. 'He foresaw, he ordained, he intended all those actions of 'men which we so rashly pronounce criminal. And we 'must therefore conclude, either that they are not criminal, 'or that the Deity, not man, is accountable for them. But 'as either of these positions is absurd and impious, it 'follows that the doctrine from which they are deduced 'cannot possibly be true, as being liable to all the same 'objections. An absurd consequence, if necessary, proves 'the original doctrine to be absurd; in the same manner as 'criminal actions render criminal the original cause, if the 'connexion between them be necessary and inevitable.'

One has so often pitied a poor parson, who, having stated a sceptical objection, found himself quite at a loss to dispose of it to the satisfaction of his least instructed listener, that it is pleasant to find the great sceptic himself here, at somewhat a similar non-plus. To the objection thus stated by Hume with his wonted incomparable force and clearness, he utterly fails in his attempt to furnish a reply.

'This objection,' he says, availing himself of the theological turn he has dexterously contrived to give it, 'consists of two parts, which we shall examine separately; '*First*—that if human actions can be traced up, by a necessary chain, to the Deity, they can never be criminal; on 'account of the infinite perfection of that Being from whom 'they are derived, and who can intend nothing but what is 'altogether good and laudable. Or, *secondly*—if they be 'criminal, we must retract the attribute of perfection which 'we ascribe to the Deity, and must acknowledge him to be 'the ultimate author of guilt and moral turpitude in all his 'creatures.' To the first part of the objection, he gives a reply so utterly unspeculative as this[1]—that the *moral*, as

[1] The irrelevancy of this reply Hume contrives rather cleverly to conceal, by dropping it, in an easy way, at the close of a page or two of somewhat abstruse illustrative discussion; of discussion elaborately needless. Not the less it is plainly irrelevant. The objection (which would scarcely in this form have occurred to any one but himself) is, that if God, assumed infinitely good, be really the author of so-styled criminal actions, it can only be 'rashly' and inaccurately that we so style them, because to impute *badness* to them would be to impeach the *goodness*, in the divine cause of them assumed. Is it any answer to this reasoning to allege—for it amounts to this—that *whether or no it is good reasoning*, by the very constitution of our nature we are inevitably determined to impute criminality to such actions? Would Hume have *elsewhere* admitted the validity of such an answer; and on the ground that our *natural belief* in *matter* 'is not to be altered or controlled' by the sceptical speculation which discredits it, have consented to dismiss the speculation *as such*, as worthless and unpermitted? Not so of course—any more than Mr. Mill, admitting, as he does, that 'through-'out the whole of our sensitive life, we unquestionably refer our sensa-'tions to a *me* and a *not*-me,' would proceed to admit further that, on this ground, his resolution of the Not-me into mere 'possibilities of sensation' was proved to be futile and absurd.

'*natural*, sentiments of the human mind, are not to be con-
'trolled or altered by any philosophical theory or specula-
'tion whatsoever.' To the second part of the objection he admits that he can give *no* answer; that 'these are 'mysteries which mere natural and unassisted reason is 'very unfit to handle;' and that he, no more than his predecessors, can 'defend absolute decrees, and yet free the 'Deity from being the author of sin.' Meantime, what of the objection, as urged on the *human* ground, with which only we are competent to deal? *This* he sharply sees, as shown in the clause '*impotence* may be pleaded for so limited a creature as man;' and, as quite too acute to delude himself with the flimsy sophistries which satisfy Mr. Mill and others, sees also that he cannot answer it, and coolly gives it the go-by. If 'for a creature limited like man impotence may be pleaded'—impotence to act save in the one way predetermined for him; if our acting is in truth a 'being acted on;' if we are not 'the authors of our own volitions,' the 'ultimate cause and author of which' is the *first* cause, who 'must both bear the blame and acquire the praise which belong to them,' on what ground can we apportion that praise and blame to *man*, whose good actions are thus, in a manner, forced upon him, for whose bad actions 'impotence to do otherwise may be pleaded'? To *this* form of the objection, the really pressing one, which will at once suggest itself, as such, to every reader of Hume's statement, he attempts *no* reply; he is careful to avoid even stating it, and escapes by a theological evasion, as we see. So transparent is the evasion, that only my profound

respect for the character of Hume as a man—and surely he was one of the most admirable of men—prevents me from surmising that, *as* an evasion, he must have been himself aware of it. Certainly my respect for him as a thinker would lead me to suppose he *must* have been. As however, while deprecating the way in which assumed moral results of doctrine are frequently used, not so properly to disprove the doctrine, as 'only to make the person of an antagonist odious,' he avows himself willing 'frankly to submit to an examination of this kind,' I should shrink from supposing his frankness merely assumed. No more than against Mr. Mill anywhere, would I permit myself here to insinuate against Hume, a *wilful* intellectual obliquity. Yet no more palpable *shirking* of the real and pressing point of an opponent's objection, than that of which Hume is here guilty, is anywhere, I believe, to be found.

Mr. Mill, in his *Logic*, when engaged in developing his 'true doctrine of Moral Causation,' says, that while it cannot surprise him that 'free-will philosophers, being mostly 'of the school which rejects Hume's analysis of Cause and 'Effect, should miss their way for want of the light which 'that analysis affords,' it is a matter of some 'wonder' to him 'that the Necessitarians, who usually admit that philo-'sophical theory, should in practice equally lose sight of it.' It seems probable that Hume understood, in all its bearings, his own doctrine of Causation as thoroughly as Mr. Mill can do; and it is made nothing less than certain by his significant clause, 'for such a limited creature as man im-

potence may be pleaded,' that he would simply have laughed to scorn the use which Mr. Mill has made of it in relation to the moral problem. The logical distinction, in this relation, between a causal *compulsion* to act *so*, and an utter, admitted, causal *inability* to act *otherwise*, he left it for Mr. Mill to discover; and I don't think that, could he have foreseen it, he would have much envied Mr. Mill his discovery. It is a great point with Mr. Mill, that as Causation is nothing but 'invariable sequence,' it involves no 'peculiar tie, or mysterious constraint exercised by the antecedent over the consequent;' there is, therefore, no *must* in the matter; no such *compulsion* as, in the use of the word Necessity, he accuses the assailants of his doctrine of insinuating as essential for their argument. Mr. Mill thus, in denying *Freedom*, equally denies *compulsion;* and this distinction between his doctrine and that of Necessity, as interpreted by his opponents, he holds to be fruitful in ethical results, and 'of supreme importance in a practical aspect.' The distinction seems to resolve itself into that between being compelled to go to a particular place, and being utterly without power to stay away from it. As, whichever way of it we suppose, the man *inevitably* finds himself *at the place*, the difference 'in a practical aspect,' a mind as subtle as that of Mr. Mill is required in order to perceive. That a distinction so frivolous as that announced, between being causally compelled to act *so*, and, as under the law of Causation, being utterly without power to act *otherwise*, Mr. Mill should have passed off upon himself as of supreme ethical import, and contrived, by the weight of his authority,

to impose upon the minds of others—very notably on such a mind as that of the 'illustrious historian and philosopher'[1] who reviewed him so kindly in the *Westminster*—must be held in the last degree surprising. Surely if we *can't help* doing a thing, it is quite as *inevitable* we should do it, as any causal compulsion could make it; and the negative of impotence admitted, not less than the positive compulsion denied, is seen to bear with crushing force on the integrity of the moral nature. To my observations somewhat to this effect Mr. Mill has vouchsafed no reply; nor has he to a series of further remarks on this part of the subject, which, for completeness' sake, I may as well briefly resume.

I suppose Mr. Mill would admit that the *word* compulsion has a meaning; and the thing an actual existence. Suppose that, on the eve of an important division, at which Mr. Mill stood pledged to his constituents to be in his place in Parliament, he was clutched hold of (presumably by Tory conspirators), tied to the tail of a cart-horse, and dragged off to Richmond. Except by announcing and denouncing a plain *must* here, a manifest felonious *compulsion*, how ever would Mr. Mill succeed in excusing himself when called to account for his absence? Yet here there is plainly nothing but a simple case of Causation, defined by Mr. Mill as merely 'invariable sequence.' The horse moves on as cause or antecedent; Mr. Mill as consequent, or effect, follows. The 'tie' is not indeed 'mysterious;' it is simply some yard or so of hemp; yet it suffices—*nolens volens*, the philosopher finds himself progressing towards Richmond.

[1] *Vide* Mr. Mill's Preface, 3d Edition.

Let us hope that he improves the time by meditating on Hume's Theory of Causation. In the material under his observation, he has advantages which Hume did not find in his billiard-balls. Almost it might seem, that while from the point of view of a disembodied spirit surveying the mutations of matter, nothing could ever be obvious to sense save invariable sequences of change; and between the cause and its effect no relation could thus be discovered save that of constant antecedence and consequence—no *nexus*, as it is usually termed—a very slight experiment of the kind suggested on that portion of the material world, with which, as *our own bodies*, relations are established in consciousness, *does* seem to afford us a perception of something of the sort—of a veritable *power* in the *cause* to control or produce the *effect*. Were the world merely a *spectacle* for us—as Hume figures it with his billiard-balls—of horses constantly progressing towards Richmond, and parliamentary philosophers following them, we might not perhaps be able to arrive at this, or at anything beyond a generalization of experience, to the effect that when horses progress, *invariably* the philosophers tied to them follow. But so soon as the experiment is made *in corpore vili*—meaning one's own body as distinguished from that of a philosopher—in the sense of resistance overcome, of force exerted from within, and succumbing to an external superior force, we seem to have a guarantee of something considerably beyond a mere invariability of sequence. That from ever so much experience of the fact as it occurs, there is valid inference for us of *power* in a strong horse to drag after it a weak

philosopher, is, I am aware, a sufficiently audacious surmise—such is the weight of philosophical authority which can be put into the scale against it. I by no means confidently assert so hazardous a proposition; only with the diffidence proper in regard of a subject which has perplexed so many of the sagest heads, I venture to hint the loose suggestion as it occurs, that *possibly* from our consciousness in being reluctantly dragged by the horse, as also perhaps from the consciousness of the horse, if we could get at it, there is fairly some such inference. All this is, however, beside the question at issue here with Mr. Mill, which may thus be brought to a point. Given any case of clear and admitted *compulsion*, torture it as he will, Mr. Mill will be able to find in it nothing but a simple case of physical causation. In one large class of cases of Causation, therefore, a *practical must or compulsion* is admitted. On what ground does Mr. Mill in *other* cases deny it? Mr. Mill cannot surely intend 'to announce one doctrine of Causa-'tion for gentlemen under constraint, and another for 'gentlemen at large.' Yet either *this*, or a vigorous dogmatic denial of any such thing as *compulsion* as anywhere existing in the universe, Mr. Mill seems bound to announce. Such is my confidence in Mr. Mill's powers of denial, in any case in which an affirmation would be fatal to a cherished Theory, that I venture to predict he will embrace this latter alternative. Should he do so in his next Edition, it might be well for him to expunge—among others—the following passage, so fatal to him otherwise, as we have seen:—'Yes; if he really "could not help" acting as he

'did; that is, if it did not depend upon his will; if he was 'under physical constraint, or under the action of such a 'violent motive that no fear of punishment could have any 'effect; which, if capable of being ascertained, is a just 'ground of exemption, and is the reason why, by the laws 'of most countries, people are not punished for what they 'were *compelled* to do by immediate danger of death.'

As Hume has here been under consideration, together with Mr. Mill's relations to him, it may be well to say, in a word, that in regard of the question at issue about him between Mr. Mill and Hamilton (in the last rather elaborate Note to Mr. Mill's concluding Chapter), on the clear evidence of Mr. Hill Burton's excellent *Life of Hume*, the balance of accuracy in appreciation is distinctly on Sir W. Hamilton's side. Hamilton's notion of Hume is, that his position is that of the merely intellectual *Sceptic*, who, taking —provisionally—his premises from the current Philosophy of his time, calmly deduced the results, and said—*There!* this is what your vaunted Reason leads us to. Mr. Mill's notion, on the other hand, is, that Hume, in all seriousness, 'accepted the premises at once, and the conclusion;' that his position was not so properly that of the Sceptic, as of the dogmatist in positive unbelief, who 'preferred being called a Sceptic to coming under a more odious title.' Quite plainly Mr. Mill has not read Mr. Burton's *Life of Hume*. If he will a little carefully do so, he will find conclusive evidence in many passages, that *he* it is—and not Hamilton, as meantime he surmises—who has 'misunderstood the whole cast of Hume's mind.' The subject cannot

well be here discussed, or even entered upon. If Mr. Mill will be good enough, in the *interim*, to glance into this *Life of Hume*, I think it not unlikely that this 'Note' will, in his Fourth Edition, be withdrawn. Should it be retained, it will be easy to shew that, in retaining it, Mr. Mill has done injustice alike to Hamilton, to Hume, and to himself. Hume was certainly no Christian; but unquestionably he was a sound—though perhaps not fervid—Theist; and, always a little short of Christianity—curiosities of dialectic apart, which to himself seemed not much more than such—believed pretty much as other people do.

EDINBURGH: T. CONSTABLE,
PRINTER TO THE QUEEN, AND TO THE UNIVERSITY.

PRESERVATION DECISION
SEE VERSO OF TITLE PAGE